

# A MINOR AUGUSTAN



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BEING  
THE LIFE AND WORKS OF  
GEORGE, LORD LYTTTELTON,  
1709-1773

*By*

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CALCUTTA  
THE BOOK COMPANY, LTD.

1934

*“ The Life and Works of George, Lord Lyttelton, 1709-1773,”  
was submitted and approved in July, 1929, as a thesis  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
English of the University of London.*

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## PREFACE

George, Lord Lyttelton, though a writer of considerable importance, and a great patron of literature, has suffered neglect for more than a century past. Johnson's biography was necessarily small and inconclusive; it made little mention of his literary friendships, and left much work undone. Phillimore's 'Memoirs' is mainly political and deals little with his writings. Mrs. Wyndham's 'Chronicle of the Eighteenth Century' contains a general account of the Lyttelton family, and is therefore discursive. The present work gives a complete account of his career, both political and literary, and of his friendships with and patronage of men of letters, and an examination of his works. The facts relating to Lyttelton's education at Eton and Oxford have been brought up to date, and the gaps in the earlier accounts have been filled up. Too little investigation has been made hitherto into Lyttelton's literary friendships. His relations with Thomson, Pope and Fielding are more completely discussed than before. Many new facts, scattered till now, have been assembled; thus, the nature of Smollett's quarrel with Lyttelton, and the reasons for Johnson's prejudice against Lyttelton, are given in full. There is considerable fresh material in the chapter on Shenstone and Landscape-Gardening, which lends new significance to the jealousy that was supposed to exist between him and Lyttelton. Lyttelton's works, both poetry and prose, once popular, have not received the attention they deserve, and an attempt has been made here to estimate the value of his contribution to English Literature.

A complete bibliography of Lyttelton's works and their translations, is given, as also of the various



accounts of his life (mostly based on Johnson's), and of other books of reference. Four letters of interest and a poem by Lyttelton, hitherto unpublished, are included in the Appendix.

I have to express my indebtedness to Prof. Oswald Doughty, of the University of Cape Town, S. Africa, for helpful suggestions given in the course of my investigations, and to the authorities of the British Museum for the facilities they offered me in the collection of material for this biography.

A. V. RAO

THE UNIVERSITY,

LUCKNOW:

23rd January, 1934.

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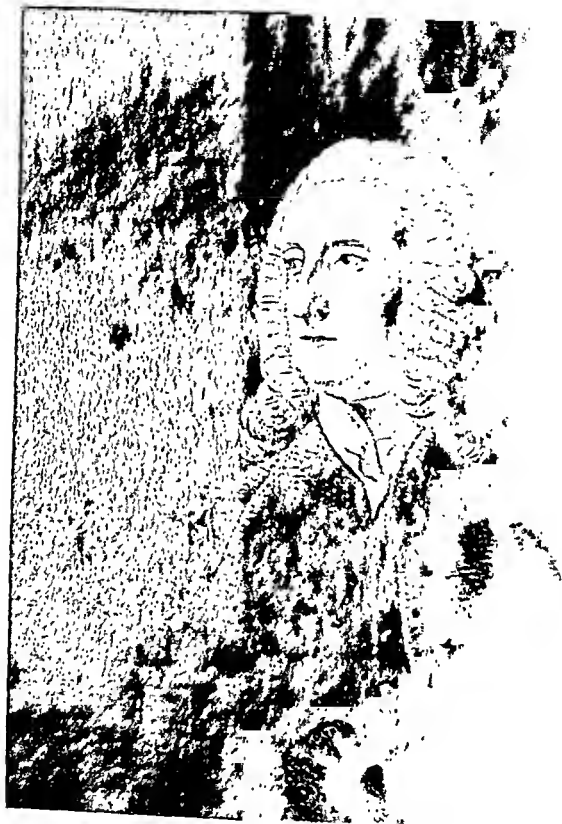
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GEORGE, LORD LYTTTELTON

*From the portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds*

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY AND EARLY LIFE

Among the many noble authors and patrons of learning in the eighteenth century, one of the most prominent figures is George Lyttelton, of Hagley, the first Lord Lyttelton. As a politician, he earned fame and distinction in his own day, and rose to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was also a man of letters, a poet and a writer of considerable merit. He was, besides, in the words of Sir Edmund Gosse, 'one of the kindest and most considerate of eighteenth century patrons.'<sup>1</sup> Lyttelton's literary life is a long story of intimate friendships with great writers and poets, of generous help to struggling genius and labouring industry alike. Pope, opulent and independent, was a dear and honoured friend of Lyttelton, who looked on him as his master in the poetic art. Thomson and Fielding got Lyttelton's unfailing assistance in times of need; their letters to him are full of affection and gratitude to a patron who looked upon them as his personal friends. The names of Shenstone, Mallet, West, Moore, Mickle, Bower and Warton are prominent among the minor poets and writers to whom Lyttelton ungrudgingly granted his favour and protection. While he helped Grub Street, Lyttelton was also a conspicuous figure in the higher society of London. One of the greatest friends of Mrs. Montagu, the famous blue-stocking

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1. Harper's Magazine, June, 1903. Article on "Eighteenth Century Patronage."

and hostess of Hill Street, he met in her circle a host of friends among whom were Beattie, Burke, Reynolds, Elizabeth Carter and Mrs. Vesey. He drew to himself friends from all spheres of society, not only because of his kind and generous nature, but also because of his amiable ways, his polished conversation, and undoubted learning. He knew well most of the important people of his time; amongst the nobility, Horace Walpole, Chesterfield, Chatham, Hardwicke and Bolingbroke; amongst the actors, Quin and Garrick; amongst the divines, Warburton, Doddridge and Warton. Loved by many and respected by all, in this distinguished circle of friends, Lyttelton was without doubt a familiar and prominent figure in the best society of the time in London.

The Lytteltons were a family of long descent and noble blood. They had been settled for centuries in the county of Worcestershire and they probably<sup>1</sup> took their surname from Littleton in the vale of Evesham.<sup>2</sup> A Thomas de Luttelton 'was living early in the thirteenth century, when he and his wife Ascelina granted lands in Upton Snodsbury, Worcestershire, to Pershore Abbey.'<sup>3</sup> Thomas died about 1240, leaving behind three sons, Edmund, Thomas and John. Edmund married the heiress of

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2. Nash: Worcestershire, 1781, Vol. 1, p. 493 seq. Supplement, 1799, p. 35.

Brydges' Collins's Peerage: 1812, Vol. 8, p. 316 seq. and the Genealogist, New Series, Vol. 37 (1921), 'Pedigree of the Family of Lyttelton,' pp. 1-29. These three books have been continually referred to for the genealogy of the Lytteltons.

3. The Genealogist. New Series, Vol. 37 (1921), p. 27.

the Frankleys of Frankley, but had no issue. Thomas, his younger brother, died about 1306, and his heir, also Thomas, became a member of Parliament for Worcestershire in 1315. His seal bore the device of an escallop, which is believed to have been the origin of the Lyttelton coat of arms. His heir was again a Thomas de Luttelton; this Luttelton's son, also a Thomas, began a long suit in 1403 claiming the Manor of Frankley under a settlement made by his ancestor Edmund's wife, who was its heiress. After protracted proceedings, he achieved success in 1410. The fortunes of the family received thus a firm foundation. Twelve years later he died, leaving as sole daughter and heiress, Elizabeth Luttelton. This lady married Thomas Heuster, afterwards Westcote, a lawyer from Lichfield, who became a member of Parliament for the county in 1431, and later a Justice of Assize at Stafford. Their eldest son, Thomas, was heir to his mother's estate as well, and took the surname Littleton, instead of Westcote, in honour of his mother's family.

This Thomas Littleton studied at the bar, and, after a brilliant career, was made a judge in 1464. He received a knighthood and wrote the famous 'Treatise on Tenures,' known still better by Chief Justice Coke's commentary, as 'Coke upon Littleton.' Carlyle, in his 'History of Frederick the Great,' humorously calls him, 'that Lyttelton *upon*

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"Thou precious volume be my guide  
Thro' Labyrinths of Law.



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Thro' Labyrinths of Law.

whom Coke sits, or seems to sit till the end of things.'¹ The family rose into prominence, wealth and power with the spread of his fame. The judge's great-gandson, John Lyttelton, enriched himself by marriage, as his ancestors had done, and purchased Hagley as a hunting seat. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1556 at Kenilworth Castle. Sir John's grandson, also John, was a knight of the Shire, and member of Parliament, and in Bacon's words, 'a man much respected for his wit and valour.' He was courted by Essex and his friends, and owing to this, he became unfortunately involved in Essex's plot against Queen Elizabeth. In spite of his assertion of innocence, and the slender evidence on which the accusation was based, John Lyttelton was condemned to death, and his estates declared forfeit to the crown. He was reprieved later, but died a lingering death in prison in 1601.

Muriel, his wife, the daughter of Lord Chancellor Bromley, was a notable woman, and on the accession of James I, she successfully pleaded with the King for the restoration of the forfeited estates. With great skill, she rehabilitated the fallen fortunes of the family, and giving her children good education, brought them up in the Protestant Church.

Two of the Lyttelton family took part in the Gunpowder Plot later, and Hagley was the scene of a remarkable event—the hiding and detection of John and Stephen, brother and distant cousin respectively

Direct my steps thro' path untry'd  
From error free, and flaw."

For the whole poem, see Appendix II.

1. Carlyle: 'History of Frederick the Great,' 1869, Vol. 2, pp. 40-44.

value. Sir Henry died without issue in 1693, and was succeeded by his brother Charles. Charles had joined the Royalist army in his youth, and had been knighted in 1662 after a distinguished career, and sent to Jamaica as the Lieutenant-Governor of that island. During the Revolution of 1688, Sir Charles remained loyal to the cause of James II. When the latter had abdicated, Sir Charles, still true to the Stuarts, refused to swear allegiance to the new sovereign. He led a life of retirement at Hagley, and dying there in 1716, was succeeded by his only surviving son, Sir Thomas Lyttelton.

Sir Thomas had married, in May 1708, his cousin Christian Temple, daughter of Sir Richard Temple of Stowe. She was an attractive young lady, and was the subject of a few lines of admiration by the poet Congreve.<sup>1</sup> She was a "lady of excellent piety and of a most gentle and sweet disposition,"<sup>2</sup> as her eldest son wrote in her memory. Always busy with the duties of the household and the care of children, she passed her time in quiet at Hagley, though usually in poor health.

George Lyttelton, the eldest son, was born on the seventeenth of January, 1709, eight months after the marriage of his parents.<sup>3</sup> We find the following interesting passage in the Rockingham Memoirs: "Lyttelton was born at seven months, and thrown away by the nurse as a dead child, but upon closer inspection was found to be alive. Though he lived

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1. 'Lines written at Tunbridge Wells on Miss Temple, afterwards Lady of Sir Thomas Lyttelton,' 1706. Congreve.

2. Collins: *Peerage*, 1812, Vol. 8, p. 252.

3. And baptized at St. James', Westminster, according to the G. E. C. *Complete Peerage of England*, etc., 1893, Vol. 5, p. 185.

has the Muse done more. Who acquainted with the poetry of the last century has not heard of Hagley, "The British Tempe," so pleasingly sung by Thomson in his 'Seasons' and so intimately associated in the verse of Pope, Shenstone and Hammond, with the Lord Lyttelton of English Literature? . . . The New Red Sandstone, out of which the Malverns arise, forms a rich, slightly undulating country, reticulated by many a green lane and luxuriant hedgerow; the hills themselves are deeply scooped by hollow dells, furrowed by shaggy ravines, and roughened by confluent eminences; and on the south-western slopes of one of the finest and most variegated of the range, half on the comparatively level red sandstone, half on the steep-sided billowy trap, lie the grounds of Hagley."<sup>1</sup> As will be shown later, Horace Walpole also was an enthusiastic admirer of Hagley Park and the surrounding scenery.<sup>2</sup> It was in such an environment that George Lyttelton was brought up and spent his boyhood.

Sir Thomas Lyttelton took an active interest in public affairs. He was thrice chosen Knight of the Shire for Worcestershire, and was a member of Parliament for a considerable number of years. In 1727 he was appointed a Lord of the Admiralty, which post he held till 1741, when he gave up politics altogether on account of old age and infirmities. The children of Sir Thomas were thus not always confined to Hagley, but had many opportunities of going to London, and they used them well.

George had five brothers and six sisters. Thomas died young and unmarried, in 1729. Charles, the

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1. 'First Impressions of England,' 1847, p. 97.

2. See pp. 201, 202, *post*.

third son, was educated at Eton, and University College, Oxford, and was called to the bar at the Middle Temple, but entered into holy orders. With his industry and methodical work, he rose to the position of King's Chaplain and ultimately Bishop of Carlisle. He died unmarried in 1768. Richard joined the army, and rose to the Governorship of the Island of Guernsey. The last son, William Henry, had a distinguished career, and was Governor first of South Carolina, and later of Jamaica. On the death of his nephew Thomas, the second baron and son of George, Lord Lyttelton, in 1779, he succeeded to the Baronetcy, and the estates, and in 1794, became Lord Lyttelton, Baron of Frankley.

Of the daughters, Christian, the eldest, was married to Thomas Pitt, elder brother of William Pitt, the first Earl of Chatham. The marriage turned out to be unhappy; Christian Pitt died in 1750. Mary, Penelope and Amelia all died early and unmarried. Anne married Francis Ayscough, D.D., clerk to the Prince of Wales, and tutor to George, her brother, at Oxford. Her son, Captain Ayscough, published in 1774 a collection of the writings, both prose and poetry, of the first Lord Lyttelton, his uncle. The youngest, Hester, married one John Fitzmaurice, an Irishman.

George Lyttelton was educated at Eton and was contemporary there with his cousins Richard and George Grenville, and with Thomas and William Pitt.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, there are no school records

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1. The following entries are taken from R. A. Austen-Leigh's 'The Eton College Register, 1698-1752,' 1927:

George Grenville—1725-28.

Richard Grenville (Temple), 1725-28.

about George, and he is one of the "Oppidans" about whose stay at Eton very little is known. Fielding was at Eton at the same time as George Lyttelton, according to Arthur Murphy, who says: "Young Fielding had the advantage of being early known to many of the first people in the kingdom, namely, Lord Lyttelton, Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, and the late Mr. Whinnington."<sup>1</sup> It is known that Fielding was at Eton in 1721-22, and as Lyttelton was younger than Fielding, he must have joined Eton about that time. The "Quarterly Review" of 1845, in the course of a review of Phillimore's memoirs of George, Lord Lyttelton, says: "On enquiring we were surprised to find that in that great school, there was no register kept of what they call Oppidans—nine-tenths of the number—that a few old manuscript lists exist in private hands, but that the present headmaster had not seen in any that had fallen in his way, the names inquired after—Pitt and Lyttelton. On further enquiry, however, we found that one of the undermasters possessed one of those manuscript lists of 1728, in which the names of Lyttelton, and a little lower, two Pitts, occur; but there cannot have been at that date the Lyttelton and Pitts that we are curious about—perhaps a brother of Lyttelton and cousins of Pitt." In Mr. Austen-Leigh's recent book,

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William Pitt (1718-26).

Thomas Pitt (1718-21).

Charles Wyndham (1718-25).

George Lyttelton 1725 List.

Henry Fielding (1721-22).

1. "Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding," 1762. A. Murphy.

however, Lyttelton's name is mentioned in the 1725 list.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Henry Bland was the Headmaster at Eton during Lyttelton's stay, and according to contemporary report; "The schole (sic) was never known to be in a more flourishing and thriving condition than under his management, having all the requisites that a master of such a school ought to be endowed with; being a man of an exceedingly fine and stately presence, of a becoming gravity, allayed (sic) with a sweetness of temper peculiar to himself, having a continual smile upon his countenance, which yet was tempered with a proper severity and dignity upon suitable occasions."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Bland was a pronounced Whig in his politics, a fact which may account in some degree for the uncompromising Whig that Lyttelton later turned out. It is also interesting to note that William Pitt had personal tuition under Bland in the upper school in 1723.

The education at Eton was severely classical from beginning to end.<sup>3</sup> Mathematics, history and geography were always in the background; Latin and Greek ruled supreme. George Lyttelton made his mark as a scholar, for we are told, on the authority of Doctor Johnson, and of succeeding biographers, that his exercises in classics were held up as models to his schoolfellows.<sup>4</sup> Hence, also, he probably

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1. R. A. Austen-Leigh: 'The Eton College Register, 1698-1752,' 1927.

2. History of Eton College: Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte, 1911, p. 281.

3. See p. 80 *post*.

4. S. Johnson: Lives of the English Poets, ed. G. B. Hill, 1905, Vol. 3, p. 446. See also 'Chatham, his Early Life and Connections,' 1910, by Lord Rosebery, where he quotes



cultivated a taste for poetical composition, as can be seen in the juvenile verses on "Good Humour"<sup>1</sup> and in the "Soliloquy of a Beauty in the Country," both written before he left Eton.

The former poem is a short one, extolling Wyndham and Pitt, his school-mates, for their 'good humour,' "which all admire, but few, too few, possess." The "Soliloquy" is not without merit considering it was written at the age of sixteen. It abounds with crisp and polished sententious lines, which at their best are not lacking in wit.

"Where none admire, 'tis useless to excel;

Where none are beaux, 'tis vain to be a belle."

The young lady laments her absence from London,

"The town, the court is Beauty's proper

sphere;

That is our Heaven and we are angels there:"

The delights of London are contrasted with the dull routine and monotony of life in a country house.

"In stupid indolence my life is spent,  
Supinely calm and dully innocent:

.....

Go at set hours to dinner and to prayer,  
(For dullness ever must be regular)

Now with mamma at tedious whist I play;  
Now without scandal drink insipid tea:"<sup>2</sup>

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(p. 29), the following from the Camelford Papers: "The surprising Genius of Lord Chatham distinguished him as early as at Eton School, where he and his friend Lord Lyttelton in different ways were looked up to as prodigies."

1. Although styled 'Written at Eton School, 1729,' the date is obviously wrong, for Lyttelton went to Oxford in December, 1725.

2. George Lyttelton: Complete Works, 1776, Vol. 3, pp. 73-75.

Lyttelton seems to have got his theme from Pope's 'Epistle to Miss Blount on her leaving the town after the Coronation,' 1715. Thus, the resemblance between the lines quoted before, and the following from Pope's poem does not seem to be accidental:

"She went from opera, park, assembly, play,  
To morning-walks, and prayers three hours  
a day;  
To part her time 'twixt reading and bohea,  
To muse and spill her solitary tea;  
Or o'er cold coffee trifle with her spoon,  
Count the slow clock, and dine exact at noon."

Lyttelton's verses run smoothly enough, and are written in the established metre of the day, the heroic couplet. The conventional phrases of the poetic vocabulary of the time are all there, as in his later poems—'the conscious heart,' 'transports,' and so on. The poem, however, shows considerable spirit and liveliness, and is an early indication of the talent of the author. It is sometimes hard to imagine how Lyttelton could have written at so young an age the poem as we see it now. It is very likely that many touches were added later; anyway, the poem was first published only in 1755.

We do not know how Lyttelton liked his schooling at Eton. In his "Persian Letters," he describes the education of several young noblemen by a learned clergyman. "They are accustomed to tremble at a rod, to tell lies in excuse of trifling faults, to betray their companions, to be spies and cowards."<sup>1</sup> It is not possible to know whether he had Eton in his

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1. G. Lyttelton: Complete Works, 1776, Vol. 1, p. 284.

mind when he wrote the passage quoted; and it is not necessary to infer that he was not happy in the company of his schoolfellows.<sup>1</sup>

It has been suggested by Bishop Percy that Johnson knew Lyttelton in his younger days at Stourbridge. Hagley is very near Stourbridge and it is not impossible that the Bishop may be right, when he says: "At Stourbridge Johnson's genius was so distinguished that, although little better than a schoolboy, he was admitted into the best company of the place, and had no common attention paid to his conversation; of which remarkable instances were long remembered there. He had met even with George, afterwards Lord Lyttelton, with whom, having some colloquial disputes, he is supposed to have conceived that prejudice which so improperly influenced him in the life of that worthy nobleman. But this could scarcely have happened when he was a boy of fifteen . . . ."<sup>2</sup> Lyttelton was of the same age as Johnson, as both were born in the same year, 1709, and Mr. A. L. Reade remarks that there is no reason "why two precocious schoolboys of sixteen or seventeen should not have had 'colloquial disputes.'"<sup>3</sup> Mr. Reade also points out that Cornelius Ford,<sup>4</sup> an uncle of Johnson's, who lived within a mile

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1. Pitt is credited with saying that 'He had scarcely ever observed a boy who was not cowed for life at Eton.' See Lord Fitzmaurice: *Life of Shelburne*, 1875-76, Vol. 1, p. 72. When we couple this with Steele's strictures on 'those licensed tyrants the Schoolmasters' (*Spectator* Nos. 157 and 162, 1711), there seems to be a foundation for Lyttelton's remarks.

2. Johnson: *Miscellanies*, ed. G. B. Hill, 1897, Vol. 2, pp. 208-9.

3. *Johnsonian Gleanings*: Part III, 1922, pp. 160-61.

4. Cornelius Ford (1693-1734). Johnson stayed with him in 1725-26.

of the Lytteltons' seat at Hagley, is sure to have known the family, and it is quite possible that he introduced Johnson to the Lytteltons. Johnson had an early love for argument, as we see in his confession that even as a boy he used always to choose the wrong side of a debate, because "most ingenious things, that is to say, most new things, could be said upon it."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Lyttelton, too, must have developed a liking for debate at Eton, where Doctor Bland had introduced the novel system of 'Declamations,' according to which, two boys had to choose opposite sides of an argument."

The certainty that among Lyttelton's friends at Eton were Fielding, Pitt, Wyndham and Grenville, and the surmise that at Hagley he may have met Johnson as a school-boy, comprise all that can be known of Lyttelton's boyhood. It does not amount to much; but perhaps childhood had little to record or reveal in those days of reticence. If under the seemingly harsh discipline of public school life, Lyttelton repressed his feelings, as others did, it is probably also true to say that the lessons of Eton must have stood him in good stead in manhood.

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1. Boswell's 'Life of Johnson,' ed. Hill, Vol. I, p. 441.

2. History of Eton College—Sir H. C. M.-Lyte, 1911, p. 282.

## CHAPTER II

### OXFORD. 1726-1728.

About the middle of 1725, Lyttelton left Eton. He proceeded from there to Oxford, and entered Christ Church as a gentleman-commoner on the fourth of December, 1725. His tutor here was the Rev. Francis Ayscough,<sup>1</sup> who later married his sister Anne, and to whom Lyttelton afterwards wrote a poetical epistle from Paris. He matriculated on the 11th of February, 1726, but left College early in 1728 without taking a degree. His contemporaries at Christ Church were Charles Wesley,<sup>2</sup> the brother of John Wesley, Charles Wyndham,<sup>3</sup> and William Murray,<sup>4</sup> destined to become later one of the most famous Judges of his time; and William Pitt was at Trinity a year after Lyttelton's matriculation.

Oxford in the reign of the first two Georges was not altogether a model University. In the first place, its attention was deeply engrossed by the Whig-versus-Tory partisanship of the day, as Hearne's 'Remarks and Collections' only too clearly shows.

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1. Ayscough, Fr. 1700-1766. Dean of Bristol, and Preceptor to George III when heir to the throne.

2. Charles Wesley (1707-1788), divine and hymn-writer. At Christ Church, 1726-33.

3. Charles Wyndham (1710-63), son of Sir William Wyndham, the Jacobite leader. Entered Christ Church, 1725. He travelled for some time with Lyttelton on his grand tour, September, 1729 to February, 1730.

4. William Murray, 1705-1793, the first Earl of Mansfield. At Christ Church from 1723 to 1730.

The stronghold of the Jacobites and Tories, there was yet at Oxford a compact and powerful Whig minority; and bitter conflicts took place between the two factions.<sup>1</sup> Such a state of facts did not conduce to the encouragement of study, and led often to intellectual stagnation. Moreover, personal animosities were not infrequent. Hearne writes in June 1726, a few months after Lyttelton had entered the University:

"There are such differences now in the University of Oxford (hardly one College, but where all the members are busied in Law businesses and quarrels, not at all relating to the promotion of learning) that good letters miserably decay everyday."<sup>2</sup>

No wonder, academical efficiency was not much in evidence. The lectures were few, the professors idle, and the audience scanty. The degree examinations, and the 'Juraments' had in most cases lost their seriousness, and the comprehensive curriculum fixed by the Laudian Statutes was not often put into practice. A truly dark and pessimistic picture, but it is not unrelieved by patches of light. There were 'tutors' in many of the colleges<sup>3</sup> who gave considerable help to their pupils, and they carried on the teaching side of the University, in spite of the continued slackness of the Professors. There was a fairly satisfactory system of tuition, especially in classics, history and logic. And while the regulations govern-

1. "The storm of politics raged in the academic tea-pot with as much violence as in the world outside." A. D. Godley: 'Oxford in the Eighteenth Century,' 1908, p. 13.

2. Remains and Collections of Thomas Hearne. (Oxf. Hist. Soc.), Vol. 9, p. 149.

3. A. D. Godley: 'Oxford in the Eighteenth Century,' pp. 67-8. There were tutors at New College, Hart Hall, Balliol, Christ Church, and a few other Colleges.

ing the study of the undergraduates were lax, they possessed one advantage—they gave to the individual student, who desired to work hard, liberty to devote greater time to his study.

Christ Church was one of the few leading Whig Colleges of the time, and was well noted for its learning in the classics. The condition of Lyttelton's College, in 1726, is thus described by that honest Tory, Hearne:

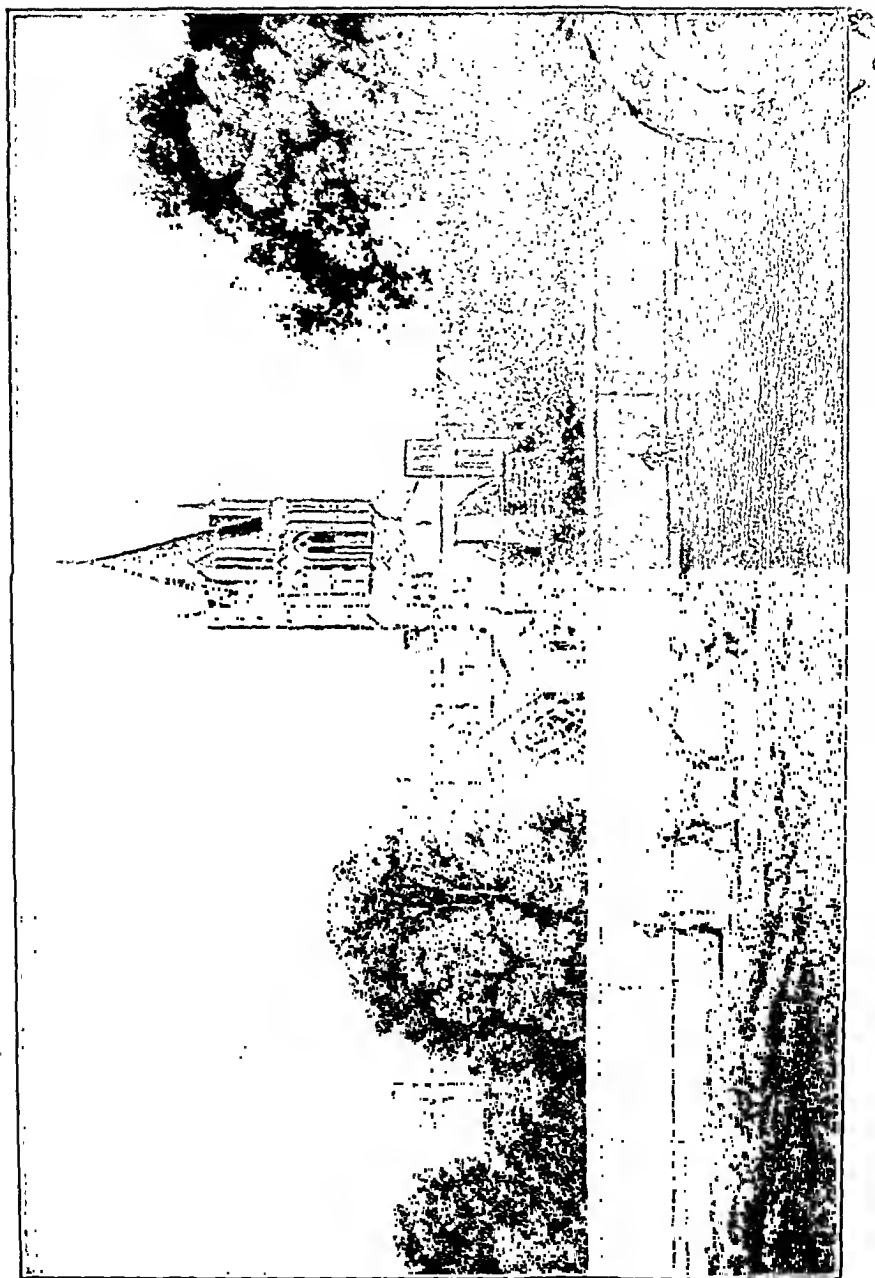
"Little did I think, some years ago, to have ever seen such a most flourishing society as Christ Church was then, brought to such miserable confusion as 'tis in at present, when as the head and all, as it were, of the Canons are Whigs, almost all the rest are warp'd and just like them . . . . Learning then was carried on and encouraged as much as it is discountenanced now."<sup>1</sup>

Hearne's account, however, is not to be taken too literally, for what he really regrets is that the Tory rule of Atterbury and Smalridge was over, and 'a vile filthy creature,' like Dr. Bradshaw, a 'Whig,' of course, had been appointed Dean. The appointment of the head was at the time, 1724, in the hands of the Government, and no wonder they nominated a Whig as the head of Christ Church. Hearne was indeed a violent Tory, and he complains thus in May 1727 of an incident that took place in the Whig College, on 'the Birthday of the Duke of Brunswick commonly called King George.'

"Mr. Jonathan Colley, being chantor of Christ Church, he yesterday sent a penitentiary Anthem,

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1. Collections, Vol. 9, pp. 89-90.





which enraged the Dean Dr. Bradshaw to that degree, that after service he sent for and reprimanded him."<sup>1</sup>

Intellectually, Christ Church was one of the leading Colleges in Oxford, 'the show college of the century,' as Dr. Godley puts it.<sup>2</sup> The direct encouragement of Aldrich and Atterbury, both ever zealous in the promotion of learning, had produced at Christ Church a set of scholars much envied for their excellence in the classics and their facility in composing Latin verses. Even Nicholas Amherst, usually so free in his denunciation of the Dons and their ignorance, makes an exception in favour of Christ Church and admits that "its tutors are intelligent"; his only charge against the College is of "undue pride."<sup>3</sup> Pride of scholarship and also of birth, for, "to Christ Church, young men of fashion were flocking freely,"<sup>4</sup> and the Whig nobility sent many of its sons to a college that was now decidedly of their faction.

As a gentleman-commoner, Lyttelton must have found life easy at Oxford. In the bills and letters of William Pitt and his tutor Stockwell to William's father,<sup>5</sup> we get a glimpse of the extraordinary privileges which were given to gentlemen-commoners. They were admitted to the Fellows' Common Room on payment of a fee of two pounds, and were thus

1. Collections, Vol. 9, p. 310.

2. 'Oxford in the Eighteenth Century,' 1908, p. 62.

3. 'Terrae Filius,' 1733. See also Godley, A. D. 'Oxford in the Eighteenth Century,' 1908, p. 63.

4. Sir C. E. Mallet. 'A History of the University of Oxford,' 1927, Vol. 3, p. 69.

5. 'Chatham, His Early Life and Connections'—Lord Rosebery, 1910, pp. 31-37. Pitt was at Trinity College from January, 1726 to July, 1727.

entitled perhaps to take wine with the Fellows and listen to their talk. For the use of the College plate, two pounds more was charged, and a 'benefaction of ten pounds' was 'required and received of every gentleman-commoner,' at least at Trinity College. Thus the privileges were costly and Pitt's yearly expenses are estimated at about a hundred and twenty pounds, about twice what a commoner generally spent.<sup>1</sup> Lyttelton's expenses must have reached the same figure as Pitt's. Dress was a costly item in the budget. A 'paddesway'<sup>2</sup> gown cost about eight guineas and was necessary for a gentleman-commoner, according to 'the custom of this place';<sup>3</sup> then there were, besides, the ruffles of cambric, the suits of drugget, the bobwigs and the 'brazen-hilted sword,'<sup>4</sup> all expensive necessities.

The institution of gentlemen-commoners was 'undoubtedly a bad one, bad for discipline and bad for study.' There was 'too much leisure for mischief and too little inclination for work.'<sup>5</sup> Naturally, many of them were, in the words of Richard Graves (who was at Pembroke College between 1732 and 1736), 'bucks of the first head,' who kept late hours over port wine and arrack punch.<sup>6</sup> Lyttelton was a sedate and sober young man, as we shall see from some of

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1. Sir C. E. Mallet, 'A History of the University of Oxford,' 1927, Vol. 3, p. 65.

2. 'Paduasoy.' Lord Rosebery's 'Chatham, His Early Life and Connections,' 1910, p. 34.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

4. Studies in Oxford History—J. R. Green, 1901. (Oxford Hist. Soc.), pp. 46-47.

5. Sir C. E. Mallet, 'A History of the University of Oxford,' 1927, Vol. 3, p. 65.

6. 'Recollection of some Particulars in the Life of the late William Shenstone, Esq.,' 1788, p. 16.

his letters written on the Grand Tour, and he is more likely to have been one of the 'flying squadron of plain, sensible, matter-of-fact men,'<sup>1</sup> than a member of the smart set or 'the jolly sprightly young fellow,'<sup>2</sup> whose tastes were considered lower, as he drank ale instead of port wine. This flying squadron, it seems, 'anxiously enquired after the news of the day and the politics of the time.' Lyttelton may have, of course, indulged in what have been called 'the frequent extra-collegiate seances' that added zest to University life. It is not improbable that he was a member of the poetical club that used to meet at the 'Three Tuns,' and display mottoes and epigrams.

Lyttelton's studies, it is likely, consisted chiefly of the classics, history and logic. The daily round of duties must have been chapel in the morning, breakfast, work with the tutor in the forenoon, dinner at one in the College, and an afternoon generally free for other activities. In spite of the many liberties given to his class, and the temptation to be idle, Lyttelton worked hard, and continued to retain at Oxford "the same reputation of superiority" in learning as at Eton. His early works were all begun at Oxford, when he was eighteen. A number of poems were written there in the spring of 1726. The 'Progress of Love' and 'Blenheim' were written in 1726 and 1727, though published much later, in 1732 and 1728 respectively. The "Persian Letters," too, must have been begun about the same time, though they were finished only in 1734 and published the following year. In a letter to his father, of the

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1. R. Graves: 'Recollection of some Particulars, etc.,' 1788, p. 17.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

4th February, 1728, he expresses his satisfaction that Sir Thomas is pleased with his "Persian Letters." Dodsley's Annual Register for 1774, says: "His pastorals and some other light pieces were originally written in that seminary of learning, Eton, whence he was removed to Oxford, where he pursued his classical studies with uncommon avidity, and sketched the plan of his 'Persian Letters,' a work which afterwards procured him great reputation."<sup>1</sup> Doctor Johnson, too, ascribes them to the period of his stay at Oxford.

It will not be out of place, at this stage, to review these early efforts of Lyttelton as a writer. The 'Persian Letters' will be dealt with in a later chapter. The 'Progress of Love' in four eclogues was probably written in 1726, though first published six years later. The poem was submitted to Pope within a year or two, for corrections and suggestions. It is not known when and where Lyttelton first met Pope. Mrs. Wyndham writes that he was introduced to Pope after the publication of 'Blenheim' in 1728, as a young man of promise.<sup>2</sup> It is very probable that he may have met him before he left for the continent the same year, for he wrote an epistle to him from Rome a few months before his return to England from the 'grand tour.' The first eclogue is addressed to:

shade,  
The nymphs of Thames a pleas'd attention  
paid."

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1. Annual Register, 1774, Part II, p. 25.

2. M. M. Wyndham: 'Chronicles of the Eighteenth Century,' 1924, Vol. I, p. 8.



pastoral."<sup>1</sup> The intolerance of the latter statement is typical of the attitude Johnson assumed towards the pastoral as a poetic form. Speaking of such a generic classification of literature Sir Edmund Gosse says, "A poem is a good or a bad poem. It is no business of the critic to condemn it because it is an eclogue or a pindaric ode, or to patronise it because it is a ballad or a moral idyll."<sup>2</sup>

It is true that there is no outstanding merit in the 'Progress of Love.' Having regard, however, to the period in which it was written, and the extreme youth of the author, it is easy to appreciate the poetry of this piece. In ease and dignity of verse, it is not much behind Pope's pastorals. There is no personal allusion or religious satire or didactic motive behind the poem, just as there is neither the idealism nor the imagination of the Elizabethan poets to give it vigour and life. In places, its personifications and hackneyed allusions to Cynthia, Pan and Phœbus, to the Naiads and Nymphs, give the poem a depressing air of artificiality, as in:

"Not there in sprightly Pleasure's genial train,  
Lurked sick disgust, or late-repenting Pain  
Nor Force nor Interest, join'd unwilling hands,  
But Love consenting tied the blissful bands."

The only excuse, perhaps, for such things, is the fact that it was the normal habit among poets to indulge in them, not excluding Pope or even Gray.

There is, however, a certain freshness and vigour about the descriptions in the poem, a freshness which

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1. Johnson: *Lives of the English Poets*, ed. G. B. Hill, 1905, Vol. 3, pp. 446, 456.

2. A. B. Grosart: '*Works of Spenser*,' 1882, Vol. 3. Prefatory Essay by Sir E. Gosse on '*Pastoral Poetry*.'

one does not often come across in the too easy elegance of similar verses in Pope's 'Hylas and Aegon.' Thus, for example:

"The frightened hind, who sees his ripen'd corn,  
Up from the roots by sudden tempests torn,  
Whose fairest hopes destroy'd and blasted lie,  
Feels not so keen a pang of grief as I."

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"Hark! how the bees with murmurs fill the plain,  
While every flower of every sweet they drain."

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"On a romantic mountain's airy head  
(While browsing goats at ease around him fed)  
Anxious he lay, with jealous cares opprest;  
Distrust and anger labouring in his breast—  
The vale beneath a pleasing prospect yields  
Of verdant meads and cultivated fields;  
Through these a river rolls its winding flood,  
Adorn'd with various tufts of rising wood;  
Here half conceal'd in trees, a cottage stands,  
A castle there the opening plain commands;  
Beyond a town with glittering spires is  
crown'd,

And distant hills the wide horizon bound . . ."

The poet had evidently a vivid recollection of an evening spent on the hills near Hagley, when he wrote the passage last quoted. It would not be incorrect or far-fetched to think that in these lines one could detect a sign of the reawakening of Nature-poetry in England, already heralded by Thomson's 'Winter' and Dyer's 'Grongar Hill.' Like Thomson, Lyttelton seems to have been at this time strongly influenced by Milton's poetry. There is, indeed, in the depiction of the natural scenery given above, a

distinctly recognizable strain of reminiscence from the following lines from 'L'Allegro':

" Russet lawns, and Fallows Gray,  
Where the nibbling Flocks do stray,  
Mountains on whose barren breast  
The labouring clouds do often rest:  
Meadows trim with daisies pide, (sic)  
Shallow Brooks and Rivers wide,  
Towers and Battlements it sees,  
Bosom'd high in tufted Trees . . . . ."

Lyttelton had made himself familiar with Milton's works during his stay at Oxford, and of this we have proof in a letter written to his father early in 1728, which contains a criticism of Milton's use of the poetic licence: "It would be endless to point out," Lyttelton wrote, "the beauties of this kind (instances of the true nobleness of thought in Milton) in 'Paradise Lost' where the boldness of his genius appears without shocking us with the least impropriety; we are surprised, we are warmed, we are transported; but we are not hurried out of our senses or forced to believe impossibilities."<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton had, in this respect, many conspicuous forerunners. Philips in 'Cyder,' Dennis in the 'Battle of Ramillia' and Gay in 'Wine,' all written in the first decade of the century, were plainly influenced by 'Paradise Lost.' Isaac Watts and Elijah Fenton were two other minor poets who imitated Milton's style and manner in a few of their poems. Lastly, Thomson himself showed in the 'Winter,' published early in 1726, how much his style had been moulded by the reading of Milton and

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1. Complete Works, 1776, Vol. 3, p. 207.



perhaps, also, John Philips.<sup>1</sup> Even Pope, according to Professor Raleigh, "was a frequent borrower from Milton," and "in his 'Homer' especially, very many reminiscences are to be found, often used in an artificial and sometimes in an absurd, manner."<sup>2</sup>

To some extent, Lyttelton imitated Pope's manner too. Thus the smartness of the following passage has a ring of the more brilliant and clever lines in Pope's poetry:

" Ah no! the conquest was obtained with ease;  
He pleased you, by not studying to please.  
His careless indolence your pride alarmed;  
And had he lov'd you more, he less had  
charmed."

However, it is not always as above; in a few places, the 'Progress of Love' has natural force and simplicity. There is one couplet which has an unexpected dramatic tone:

“ Alone he saw the beauteous Delia go;  
At once transported, he forgot his vow  
( Such perjuries the laughing gods allow ! )

Or again—

“Would my clos’d eye had sunk in endless  
 Ere I was doomed to bear that hateful sight.”

The closing lines of the poem are genuinely poetical:

“ When late old age our heads shall silver o’er,  
And our slow pulses dance with joy no more;  
When time no longer will thy beauties spare,

1. For a detailed study of this question, see R. D. Havens: *The Influence of Milton on English Poetry*, 1912, pp. 639, 680.

2. Sir Walter Raleigh: Milton, 1900, pp. 252-53.

And only Damon's eye shall think thee fair;  
 Then may the gentle hand of welcome Death,  
 At one soft stroke, deprive us both of breath ! ”

‘Blenheim,’ the other poem written at Oxford, was published in 1728. Twenty-three years before, two greater poets than Lyttelton had attempted the same subject in verse—John Philips in ‘Blenheim’ and Addison in ‘The Campaign.’ Lyttelton’s effort cannot stand comparison with either poem, whether in point of description or vigour of style. In one respect, Lyttelton follows Philips—in the adoption of blank verse and the imitation of Milton’s ‘Paradise Lost.’ As seen before, Lyttelton was, about the time, much under the influence of Milton’s poetry.<sup>1</sup> Whether he was directly influenced by Philip’s poem it is not easy to decide. Though all the three poets extol Marlborough, Addison and Philips describe the actual battle and the campaign, whereas Lyttelton describes more the palace of Blenheim. To the high tribute he pays to the Duke for his military prowess, Lyttelton adds an eulogy of the Duchess for her constant love. He submitted the poem to the Duchess before publication, and she was naturally pleased at the homage paid to her by the young poet. Lyttelton wrote to his father: “I am proud that the Duchess approves my verses, for her judgment does great honour to those that please her.”<sup>2</sup>

‘Blenheim’ is not a spontaneous effort of Lyttelton’s pen. Miltonisms are much in evidence and they do not enhance the merit of the poem. Phrases like ‘chief of confederate hosts’ and similes

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1. See his letter of 4th February, 1728, to his father, quoted before. Complete Works, 1776, Vol. 3, p. 207.

2. *Ibid*, p. 206.

in the manner of Milton are in frequent use. The poem begins with an invocation to Minerva and Thalia, the Sylvan Muse. Then follows a description of Blenheim Castle, with the conventional dryads and nymphs. The comparison of Marlborough with the heroes of classical history, such as Lucullus, Cæsar and Alexander, is in the approved style, and sets the stamp of immaturity on the verses. Adulation and ecstatic praise are heaped on the devoted head of the Duke. Patriotism is another incentive to the poet.

“ Which shall I admire, which worthiest praise,  
The hero or the people? Honour doubts,  
And weighs their virtues in an equal scale.

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Britain, like Heaven, protects a thankless world,  
For her own glory nor expects reward.”

While there is not much that is original, there are a few lines which have the ring of true poetry.

“ Like two fair stars with intermingled light,  
In friendly unison together they share,  
Aiding each other's brightness, till the cloud  
Of night eternal quenched the beams of one.”

To Marlborough,

“ Indulgent Heaven  
Gave a companion to his softer hours,  
With whom conversing he forgot all change  
Of fortune or of state, and in her mind  
Found greatness equal to his own, and lov'd  
Himself in her.”

Phillimore remarks that the lines “ With whom conversing, he forgot all change of fortune or of state ” are curiously reminiscent of Milton's “ With thee conversing, I forget all time.”<sup>1</sup>

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1. Paradise Lost.

Apart from the writing of the 'Progress of Love' and 'Blenheim,' there is little else that can be discussed of Lyttelton's activities or achievements at the University. After nearly two years' stay, Lyttelton left Oxford without taking a degree. He was a good scholar, but an aristocrat seldom took a degree in those days and Lyttelton left the University without completing his education. It was not very necessary for him to take a degree, considering his father's position and the career of politics open to him. Sir Thomas may have also desired his son to begin the last part of his education—the grand tour—sooner. Whatever it was, early in 1728, Lyttelton left Christ Church and returned to Hagley for a short interval, before beginning his travel in Europe.

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### CHAPTER III

## THE GRAND TOUR. 1728-1730.

In April 1728, Lyttelton left England for the continent on his 'grand tour' to France and Italy. He was by nature grave and serious, even as a young man, and pleasure was far less his motive for travel than useful experience and increase of knowledge. He was not anxious about having the 'gay time' which many young men contrived to have in the same circumstances. The epistle he wrote to his tutor, Ayscough, from Paris makes this clear.

"Me other cares in other climes engage,  
Cares that become my birth and suit my age;  
In various knowledge to improve my youth,  
And conquer prejudice, worst foe to truth;  
By foreign arts domestic faults to mend,  
Enlarge my notions, and my views extend,  
The useful science of the world to know,  
Which books can never teach, or pedants  
show."<sup>1</sup>

Sir Thomas was not wealthy enough to send a tutor along with his son, as companion and mentor, as was the usual practice among the richer aristocracy. So George was responsible to his own self and had a fair amount of independence, which he did not abuse. He owed his father the duty of acquainting him with the events of the journey, the details of his stay and other matters connected with the tour; he

1. See Collected Works, 3rd Ed., 1776. Dodsley, Vol. 3, p. 86.

performed this task, without trouble, and it is from these letters to his father that we learn how the tour progressed.

Lyttelton arrived at Calais "after a passage of sixteen hours without anything to eat or drink."<sup>1</sup> He bought there a "mighty good Italian post-chaise" for twelve guineas, and went on to Lunéville, the capital of Lorraine, armed with a letter of introduction from Sir Robert Walpole to Prince Craon, Minister to Leopold, Duke of Lorraine. Sir Thomas, being a Lord of the Admiralty, and a strong supporter of Sir Robert Walpole, had influence enough to obtain this letter of recommendation for his son, and the letter certainly helped George a good deal in Lunéville. "The Duke himself was pleased to tell me that he would endeavour to render my stay here as agreeable to me as possible."<sup>2</sup>

The next letter, written a month later, on June 8, expressed George's happiness at the marriage of his sister Christian to Thomas Pitt, the elder brother of William Pitt. Referring to William and his early love for Molly, Lyttelton's sister, he writes: "Would to God Billy Pitt had a fortune equal to his brother's, that he might make a present of it to my pretty little Molly. But, unhappily, they have neither of them any portion but an uncommon share of merit, which the world would not think them much the richer for."<sup>3</sup> Molly possessed beauty and charm, but the marriage

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1. Maud Wyndham: *Chronicles of the Eighteenth Century*, 1924. Vol. 1, p. 9.

2. *Collected Works of George Lyttelton*, Letter of May 13, 1728. For the letters see Vol. 3, pp. 205-300.

3. Letter of June 8, 1728.

could not take place, as neither had money enough to live on. Molly died in 1733, when George wrote: "My dear sister Molly is dead..... She was a miracle of virtue and sweetness; such a *friend* as no man ever had." This early attachment of William Pitt to Molly Lyttelton was one of the many which took place between the Lytteltons and the Pitts. Mrs. Wyndham, referring to them, writes: "In after years, they were to form a noted political alliance, but when first they grew up, they spent their time falling in love, more or less, with each other's sisters. Lyttelton at the age of nineteen (that is, about 1728) was desperately smitten with the lovely Harriot Pitt, and confided his plight to her brother William, who told his mother: 'I am in pain for poor Lyttelton; I wish there were many leagues of sea between him and the charms of Miss Harriot. If he dies, I shall sue her for the murder of my friend.'"<sup>1</sup> George soon after went abroad and returned quite heart-whole, while Harriot married another.

Lyttelton writes facetiously about his mother's desire that he should keep a journal of his tour, "after the manner of the sage Mr. Bromley."<sup>2</sup> "Alas! I am utterly unfit for so great a work; my

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1. Miss Wyndham: 'Chronicles of the Eighteenth Century,' 1924, Vol. 1, p. 5. Later, Lyttelton fell in love with Ann, her sister, and as ineffectually. See Lord Rosebery's 'Chatham, His Early Life and Connections,' 1910, pp. 41-42. William Pitt called Lyttelton's love 'Madness.' "Sure there never was so much fine sense and Extravagance of Passion jumbled together in any one man." *Ibid.*, p. 42.

2. Letter of June 8, 1728. 'The sage Mr. Bromley' was William Bromley, 1664-1732, Speaker of the House of Commons, 1710, author of 'Remarks in the Grand Tour,' 1692.

genius is light and superficial, and lets slip a thousand observations which would make a figure in his book. It requires much industry and application.....to know how many houses there are in Paris..... how many saints in the Romish Calendar, and how many miracles to each saint; and yet to such a pitch of exactness the curious travellers must arrive who would imitate Mr. Bromley. . . . . For my part, I was so shamefully negligent as not to set down how many crosses are in the road from Calais to Lunéville; nay, I did not so much as take an inventory of the relics in the churches I went to see ..... I shall.....write to her a particular of what rarities I have seen; but of all ordinary spectacles, such as miracles, rarée-shows and the like, I beg her permission to be silent.”<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton did not take kindly to Lunéville, but stayed there a considerable time, nearly four months, as his father had instructed him to do so. However, as he stayed longer, he came to dislike Lunéville more and more; he was not to be blamed for this aversion to that city.<sup>2</sup> “The spirit of quadrille,” he wrote in July, 1728, “has possess the land from morning till midnight; there is nothing else in every home in town. This court is fond of strangers, but with a proviso that strangers love quadrille..... however, in summer, one may contrive to pass a day

1. Letter of June 8, 1728.

2. At first he tried to conceal this discontent at his stay in Lunéville, and wrote:

“As for my way of living here, it is agreeable enough. I see the best company in the place, am regular at my exercises, and read and pray by stealth. . . . I am extremely dull here, but I should be merry as a bird at Hagley.”



without quadrille, because there are agreeable promenades, and little parties out of doors; but in winter you are reduced to play at it or sleep like a fly till the return of spring. Indeed in the morning the Duke hunts; but my malicious stars have so contrived it that I am no more a sportsman than a gamester." Again, "There are no men of learning in the whole country; on the contrary, it is a character they despise. A man of quality caught me the other day reading a Latin author, and asked me with an air of contempt whether I was designed for the Church. All this would be tolerable if I were not doomed to converse with a set of English who are still more ignorant than the French, and from whom with my utmost endeavours I can't be absent six hours in the day. Lord Hermitage is the only one among them who has common sense; and he is so scandalously debauched in his principles as well as practice that his conversation is equally shocking to my morals and my reason."<sup>1</sup>

He had perforce to pass a good deal of his time in the company of his disagreeable countrymen. He had wanted eagerly to learn French, but "there was nothing but English talked from June to January."<sup>2</sup> In a letter written a few months after he had left Lunéville, he gives reasons for his wishing never to return there.<sup>3</sup> "Lunéville was my school of breeding, and I was therefore more unavoidably subject à quelques bévues d'écolier, as the *politesse* practised in that place is fuller of ceremony than elsewhere, and has a good deal peculiar to itself. The memory

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1. Letter of July 21, 1728.

2. Soissons, October 28, 1728.

3. Soissons, November 20, 1728.

of these mistakes, though lost perhaps to others, hangs upon my mind when I am there and depresses my spirits to such a degree, that I am not like myself. One is never agreeable in company, where one fears too much to be disapproved; and the very notion of being ill-received has as bad an effect upon our gaiety as the thing itself." Lyttelton was probably the butt of ridicule at the hands of his gayer young countrymen; his shy, awkward manners, retiring disposition, and clumsy mistakes must have brought forth their laughing contempt. His sensitiveness on this point made him write with bitterness: "A fool, with a majority on his side, is the greatest tyrant in the world." With more justice he proceeds to explain his position. "I am far from expecting they should all be wits, much less philosophers. My own weaknesses are too well known to me, not to prejudice me in favour of other people's when they go but to a certain point. There are some extravagances that have always an excuse, sometimes a grace attending them. Youth is agreeable in its sallies, and would lose its beauty if it looked too grave; but a reasonable head and an honest heart are never to be dispensed with. Not that I am so severe upon Lunéville and my English friends as to pretend there are not men of merit and good sense among them. There are some undoubtedly; but all I know are uneasy at finding themselves in such company."

Lyttelton left Lunéville about the end of September, and went to Soissons, where he stayed with Stephen Poyntz,<sup>1</sup> the British Envoy to the Congress

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1. S. Poyntz (1685-1750), Secretary to Lord Townshend, —later at Soissons, and finally Governor to the Duke of Cumberland.

then sitting. His father had granted him permission to accept the invitation of Poyntz and to leave Lunéville for Soissons. To Lyttelton the prospect of meeting well-known statesmen and ministers at Soissons was a very pleasing one. The Congress had been called together to establish peace between Spain and England, at the conclusion of the war between the two countries. There were delegates from other European nations, and the hope was raised that their deliberations would help to free Europe from war. It achieved little, but Lyttelton was greatly pleased with his visit to Soissons. "The countrymen at Soissons are men of virtue and good sense; they mix perpetually with the French, and converse for the most part in that language."<sup>1</sup> Poyntz allowed his young friend to help him with his work and Lyttelton frequently wrote to his father about the negotiations for peace and the visits of other ambassadors and ministers. "Mr. Stanhope<sup>2</sup> is always at Fontainebleau. I went with Mr. Poyntz to Paris for four days, where the Colonel was there to meet him; he received me with great civility and kindness. We have done expecting Mr. Walpole,<sup>3</sup> who is obliged to keep strict guard over the cardinal,<sup>4</sup> for fear the German ministers should take him from us; they pull and haul the old gentleman so many ways, that he does not know where to turn, or into whose arms to throw himself." At the close of the letter, his good spirits show themselves unmistakably: "No news from. . . and her

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1. October 28, 1728.

2. Later, Lord Stanhope.

3. Horatio Walpole, First Baron, 1678-1757, brother of Sir Robert Walpole, later Earl of Oxford. See D. N. B.

4. Cardinal Fleury.

beloved husband; their unreasonable fondness for each other can never last; they will soon grow as cold to one another as the town to the Beggar's Opera.<sup>1</sup> Pray Heaven I may prove a false prophet! but married love and English music are too domestic to continue long in favour." In the middle of November, he wrote: "I have learnt more French since I came here than I should have picked up in a twelvemonth at Lorraine. . . . I cannot help giving myself the pleasure of acquainting you of the extraordinary civilities I receive from Mr. Poyntz. He has in a manner taken me into his family. I have the honour of his conversation at all hours. . . . He was so good as to desire me to ask your leave to pass the winter with him, and to encourage me to do it, promised that I should not be without my share of public business."<sup>2</sup>

Lyttelton thus engaged himself in useful activities and stayed with Poyntz at Soissons till the middle of December, 1728, when the latter was suddenly ordered to Paris. Lyttelton had planned to go to Italy, but this event altered his plans. "A sudden order to Mr. Poyntz has broken all my measures. He goes to-morrow to Paris, to stay there in the room of Messrs. Stanhope and Walpole, who are on their return for England. His Excellency is so kind and good as to desire me to accompany him to Paris, and live there *en famille* at least till I hear from you

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1. Produced first on January 29, 1728. It had an immense popularity, and ran for sixty-three nights. It is difficult to believe with Lyttelton that the 'town grew cold to the play.'

2. November 20, 1728.

... I have ventured to take this step without your orders."<sup>1</sup>

The next letter is from Paris, dated 22nd January, 1729. His father had granted him permission to go, but had expressed his anxiety that the expenses should not be too high, as he had done before, even when Lyttelton was in Lorraine. Lyttelton did not spend much on pleasure, but in the matter of dress he did his best to keep in the fashion, and he had every now and then to ask for more money. In Paris, naturally, dress entailed more expenditure, and Lyttelton could not help spending what was necessary, though it must have been a good sum of money. "I am guilty of extravagance," he wailed, "but do not know how to save as some people do."<sup>2</sup> In the letter written in January, 1729, he wrote:

"I have lately, Sir, spent more than I could wish, and the necessity of doing it gives me no small uneasiness, but it is an undoubted fact, that without show abroad, there is no improvement.

You yourself confess it, when you say, the French are only fond of strangers who have money to pay them for their compliments. You express a great uneasiness for fear I should grow fond of games of chance. I have sometimes risked a little at them, but without any passion or delight. Gaming is too unreasonable and dishonest for a gentleman, who has either sense or honour, to addict himself to it, but to set you quite at ease in that point, I give you my word of honour, and desire no pardon if I recede from it, that I never will addict myself to this

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1. Letter of December 20, 1728.

2. February 15, 1729.

destructive passion, which is such a whirlpool, that it absorbs all others."<sup>1</sup>

Sir Thomas had written a letter of gratitude to Poyntz for the care he had taken of his son at Soissons and Paris. Poyntz in reply wrote: ".....He retains the same virtues and studious dispositions, which nature and your care planted in him, only strengthened and improved by age and experience; so that, I dare promise you, the bad examples of Paris.....will never have any effect upon him. ....I shall not be wanting to employ him, as occasion offers..... He cannot fail of making you and himself happy, and of being a great ornament to our country, if with that refined taste and delicacy of genius, he can but recall his mind, at a proper age from the pleasures of learning, and gay scenes of imagination, to the dull road of business. This I have sometimes taken the liberty to hint to him, though his own good judgment made it very unnecessary."<sup>2</sup> It is evident from this letter that Sir Thomas had intended his son, from the beginning, for a career in politics and Parliament.

A letter, written by Poyntz in October, 1729,<sup>3</sup> gives us valuable information about Lyttelton's health and his occasional moods of reverie and day-dreaming. "His behaviour has continued uniformly the same as I described last winter; and I am morally sure will never alter, in any country, or any part of life, for the worse. His health is liable to frequent interruptions, though not dangerous ones, nor of any long continuance. They seem to proceed chiefly from

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1. January 22, 1729.

2. Paris, January 22, 1729.

3. Haute Fontaine, Soissons. October 18, 1729.

an ill digestion, which, I believe, may sometimes be occasioned by the vivacity of his imagination's pursuing some agreeable thought too intensely, and diverting the spirits from their proper function, even at meals; for we have often been obliged that time to recall him from his reveries, that made him almost absent to his company, though without the least tincture of melancholy.....His mind is ever cheerful and active, and full of such benevolence towards his friends and relations in England, as well as such zeal for the honour and interests of his country, as, I verily believe, will never let him sink down into indolence and inaction. However, this sickness of the mind, and ill state of bodily health, which naturally influence and promote the other, are the two points most necessary to guard against, in a nature the most exempt from faults I ever met with."

Lyttelton in his turn was an enthusiastic admirer of Poyntz. He speaks warmly of the "liveliness of his wit, uncommon strength of judgment . . . . and the great and noble sentiments of Poyntz."<sup>1</sup> He wrote a poetical epistle to Poyntz while in Paris, asking him:

" Amidst the toil of anxious state,  
Does not the secret soul desire retreat?

\* \* \* \*

Just is the wish. For some the happiest meed,  
To favour'd man by smiling Heaven decreed,  
Is to reflect at ease on glorious pains,  
And calmly to enjoy what virtue gains."<sup>2</sup>

Then follows a picture of the retirement which ought to reward the closing years of one who has

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1. Letter of October 6, 1729, from Paris.

2. Collected Works, Vol. 3, pp. 90-94.

served his country long. It reminds us very much of Wordsworth's 'Happy Warrior':

"Not him I praise, who from the world retir'd,  
By no enlivening generous passion fir'd  
On flowery couches slumbers life away,  
And gently bids his active powers decay;  
Who fears bright Glory's awful face to see,  
And shuns renown as much as infamy,  
But blest is he, who, exercised in cares,  
To private leisure public virtue bears;  
Who tranquil ends the race he nobly run,  
And decks repose with trophies Labour won,  
Him Honour follows to the secret shade,

\* \* \* \*

Friendship and Truth on all his moments wait,  
Pleased with retirement rather than with state."

After dwelling on the simple joys that art and science, books and friends can give him in his retirement, Lyttelton proceeds to say that a loving wife must complete the picture of happiness; that Poyntz must marry.

For,

"The point to which our sweetest passions move,  
Is, to be truly lov'd and fondly love,

\* \* \* \*

Happiness is near allied to love."<sup>1</sup>

The poem, apart from its conventional phrases, possesses merit, that one would not expect in ordinary epistolary verse. There is another, a small piece, "to be written under a picture of Mr. Poyntz," but the tone of insufferable flattery in the poem forbids quotation.

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1. Collected Works, Vol. 3, pp. 95-96.



“ Such is thy form, O Poyntz, but who shall find  
 A hand, or colours, to express thy mind? ”  
 is only a modest couplet out of the poem.

Poyntz and Lyttelton stayed in Paris until the middle of May, 1729, when they returned to Haute Fontaine, near Soissons. Two months later, however, they again went to Paris, and the letter of August 13, 1729, from Paris, gives an account of the Queen of Spain, her offers to the English ambassadors, and the chances of agreement towards the signing of a treaty. Subsequent letters, also dealing with the negotiations, are written in French. The letter of August 30th gives the extraordinary news that Prussia was on the point of war with Hanover. King Frederick William I of Prussia had seized by force, upon some burly Hanoverians, to recruit them for his army, and King George, as Elector, had retaliated by summarily arresting all the Prussians in his territory. Frederick gave an ultimatum, and threatened to send a huge army to obtain satisfaction from the Elector, if his demands were not complied with before a certain date. The date passed, and Frederick carried out his threat. War was imminent, but wiser counsels prevailed, and a fortnight later, peace was restored between the kingly cousins. A letter of September 15th says, “ The difference with the Prussian is nearly composed.”

Meanwhile, an heir was born to the throne of France, and Paris was all gaiety and excitement. George wrote to his father a lively account of the national rejoicings: “ Sunday by four o’clock we had the good news of a dauphin, and since that time I have thought myself in Bedlam . . . . The people are all stark mad with joy, and do nothing but dance

and sing about the streets by hundreds and thousands. The expressions of their joy are admirable: one fellow gives notice to the public, that he designs to draw teeth for a week together upon the Pont Neuf gratis. The king (Louis XV) is as proud of what he has done, as if he had gained a kingdom . . . . The Duke of Orleans was sincerely, and without affectation, transported at the birth of the dauphin. The succession was a burden too heavy for his indolence to support, and he piously sings hallelujah for his happy deliverance from it. The good old cardinal cried for joy . . . . It is very late; and I have not slept these three nights for the squibs and crackers, and other noises that people make in the streets."

On September 16th, Lyttelton wrote to his father for leave to go to Italy—"as a further delay would make my journey to Italy impracticable, and I am obliged to mention it to you, and to desire immediate leave to set out that day. . . . I hope I have given you no reason to alter your first intentions of sending me to Italy, a country I long to see, and where I may expect to improve myself considerably. . . . You need not give yourself the trouble of looking out recommendations for me to any of the Italian courts, I being acquainted with their ministers here, and not doubting that I shall have as many as I want." The next letter informed Sir Thomas that Stanhope was appointed minister at the Spanish court, and gave a description of the King of Spain, Philip V, "A senseless creature who has no other character of royalty than power to do mischief." "However, I hope all will turn well and that his Catholic Majesty will behave himself a little like a King, since the Queen will have him to be one in spite of his teeth.

About three months ago she caught him going down stairs at midnight, to abdicate, in his dressing gown. He was so incensed at the surprise and disappointment that he beat her cruelly, and would have strangled her if she had not called for help."

Sir Thomas gave his son the desired permission to leave for Italy, and Lyttelton started on the 7th October. He assured his father that he would abide by his advice. "I shall observe your caution against grapes, new wine, and pretty women, though they are all very tempting but dangerous things." From Lyons, nine days later, he wrote a long letter on the state of the French nation, the character of the King, his minister, the Government and the trade of the country.

"I cannot take leave of France, without sending a few observations upon the present state of it."

The letter is remarkably well-written, and is almost in the form of an essay, containing very good character-sketches of Louis XV, and Cardinal Fleury, his Prime Minister. Lyttelton is singularly free from prejudice; his picture of France and her people is a fairly accurate one and the result of careful observation.<sup>1</sup> The style reveals a charm and balance, that

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comes as a pleasant surprise to the reader. Describing Cardinal Fleury, Lyttelton writes:

"He is the very reverse of Mazarin, both in his temper and administration; naturally honest and sincere, he hates all artifice in business. . . . Nobody has more sweetness and humanity in his disposition. His conversation is free and agreeable, without descending from his dignity; his behaviour, moral and religious, though in his younger days he was suspected of a little gallantry. There is something very insinuating in his wit and very proper for a courtier; but no extraordinary talents. Had he come a little earlier into the ministry, he would have been more knowing, and have made a greater figure. He has a paternal affection for the king's person, and an ardent zeal for his service. . . . He is not the crooked politician we take him for in England, nor yet so weak as some here are apt to think him, but a man of plain sense that lays down a reasonable scheme, and pursues it constantly and fairly."

After dwelling on the decay of law and justice, and the growth of tyranny in France, Lyttelton comes to the conclusion that Whiggism is the panacea for all evils—a creed which he accepted thoroughly in his political career.

"I am more strongly attracted to my own country by what I see of the miseries abroad, and find the spirit of Whiggism grows upon me under the influence of arbitrary power; it will still increase when I come into Italy, where the oppression is more sensible in its effect, and where the finest country in the world is quite depopulated by it."

While in Paris, Lyttelton had written a poetical epistle to Rev. Ayscough, his tutor at Oxford and

later, his brother-in-law.<sup>1</sup> There is in this poem, a description of France, which had the good fortune of being praised by Voltaire.

In a very interesting letter written in 1750<sup>2</sup> which will be quoted in full later, Voltaire writes:

"I have by me some verses that pass under your name and which you are supposed to have writ in a journey to Paris. They reflect very justly on our nation, and they run thus:

"A nation here I pity and admire,  
Whom noblest sentiments of glory fire,  
Yet taught by custom's force and bigot fear,  
To serve with pride and boast the yoke  
they wear;  
Whose nobles, born to cringe and to command,  
In courts a mean, in camps a gen'rous band,  
From each low tool of power, content receive,  
Those laws, their dreaded arms to Europe give,  
Whose people vain in want, in bondage blest,  
Tho' plundered, gay, industrious tho'  
oppressed, etc."

These verses deserve a good translator and they should be learned by every Frenchman."

The epistle to Ayscough has for its theme the decay of France, in art and literature, in law and government. Lyttelton compares her fall with the fall of Greece, "sunk beneath a mitigated doom, the slave and tutoress of protecting Rome." France was once in a glorious state:

"Yet here the Muses deign'd a while to sport  
In the short sunshine of a favouring court;

1. Complete Works, Vol. 3, pp. 84-89, 1776.

2. See Phillimore: *Memoirs and Correspondence of G. Lyttelton*, pp. 323-25.

Here Boileau, strong in sense, and sharp in wit :

\* \* \* \*

Here Molière, first of comic wits, excell'd  
 Whate'r Athenian theatres beheld;  
 By keen, yet decent, satire, skill'd to please,  
 With morals mirth uniting, strength with ease,  
 Now charm'd I hear the bold Corneille inspire  
 Heroic thoughts, with Shakespeare's force  
 and fire!

Now sweet Racine, with milder influence, move  
 The softened heart to pity and to love."

The poet would fain turn from a land of arbitrary  
 sway to England, great and free:

"Yet oft a tender wish recalls my mind  
 From present joys, to dearer left behind!  
 O native Isle, fair Freedom's happiest seat  
 At thought of thee, my burning pulses beat."

But Lyttelton dares not hope, when he thinks of the  
 fate of other countries, once free and glorious, now  
 ruled by tyrants.

"Yet oh! what doubt, what sad presaging voice,  
 Whispers within, and bids me not rejoice;  
 Bids me contemplate every state around,  
 From sultry Spain to Norway's icy bound;  
 Bids their lost rights, their ruined glories, see;  
 And tells me, these, like England, once  
 were free!"

Lyttelton's theme, strangely enough, has its echo in  
 parts of Goldsmith's "The Traveller." His pessi-  
 mism, his denunciation of luxury and his love of  
 freedom are all reflected in the later poem; Goldsmith  
 writes:

"Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,  
 His first best country, ever is at home.



And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,  
And estimate the blessings which they share,  
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom, find  
An equal portion dealt to all mankind.

\* \* \* \*

Vain, very vain, my weary search to find,  
That bliss which only centres in the mind,

\* \* \* \*

In every government, though terrors reign,  
Though tyrant kings or tyrant laws restrain,  
How small, of all that human hearts endure,  
That part which laws or kings can cause

or cure!"

The 'Epistle,' considered as a whole, has genuine merit, in spite of the superior tone of wisdom which its twenty-year-old author employs, and there is a rare strength in the two lines:

"Dispel the mists of error, and unbind

Those pedant chains that clog the

freeborn mind."

Lyttelton did not stay long at Lyons. In the long letter written from that city, and dated 16th October, 1729, he had said: "I set out to-morrow for Geneva, in company with Sir William Wyndham's son, and shall go from thence to Turin." This was Charles Wyndham,<sup>1</sup> a friend at Eton, and also at Oxford, where they had both studied at Christ Church. When at Eton, Lyttelton had addressed him thus in the poem, "Good Humour":

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1. Charles (?) Wyndham, 1718-25 at Eton. Friend of Lyttelton and Pitt. Matriculated Christ Church, Oxford, 4th May, 1725. From R. A. Austen-Leigh's "Eton College Register," 1927.

Say, Wyndham, if 'tis possible to tell,  
 What is the thing in which you most excel?  
 Hard is the question, for in all you please;  
 Yet sure good nature is your noblest praise,  
 Secured by this your parts no envy move,  
 For none can envy him whom all must love.  
 This to Pitt's genius adds a bright grace,  
 And sweetens every charm in Celia's face.<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton wrote next in French from Geneva about the end of October.<sup>2</sup> He was highly pleased with his visit, and the company of polite and learned men he mixed with. "Le lac et les montagnes, et les promenades, qui sont autour de cette belle ville, présentent la vue la plus riante et la plus agréable qu'on puisse voir." On his way he had stopped at the monastery of the Grand Chatreuse, where the silent monks courteously received him. The rugged scenery, and the remoteness of the monastery, made a deep impression on his mind—"dans un désert affreux, parmi des rochers et de précipices presque inaccessibles, où de tout coté on voit tomber des torrents du plus haut sommet des montagnes, pour former une petite rivière, qui remplit la profondeur du vallon, et coule avec beaucoup de rapidité entre des bois et des forêts sauvages dont tout le pais est couvert."

In the middle of November, the two friends had reached Turin after crossing the Alps, a dangerous undertaking in those days.<sup>3</sup> "J'ai eu un assez rude passage sur le Mont Cenis; la neige tombant avec beaucoup de violence, et le vent de bise qui nous

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1. See Complete Works, 1776, Vol. 3, p. 179.

2. October 30, 1729, from Geneva.

3. November 16, 1729.

donna dans le visage, nous causant un froid épouvantable." They had ridden up on mules, but when they were descending, they were forced to resort to "Chaises à porteurs," on account of the steep precipices and dangerous declivities. The mist was so thick, that they could not see the surrounding mountains, and Lyttelton found nothing much to admire except a waterfall, "des magnifiques cascades entre les rochers." Then they came to the plain of Piedmont, "belle et fort bien cultivée." They had a good reception—"Le Roi nous a reçu fort gracieusement Monsieur Wyndham et moi."

A fortnight later they were at Genoa, and here they stayed five days. Lyttelton gives an account of the government in Genoa, and remarks, "What the republic suffers most in, is the decline of genius and the spirit in their governors—the modern nobility are all sunk in ease and sloth, without courage or ability to act either for their honour, or their country's." From Genoa, he went to Milan and the end of the year found him at Venice. He had travelled through "the worst roads in Europe," and was glad to reach Venice. "Venice is the place in the world, that a traveller sees with most surprise. We have a very fine Opera; Colzona and Farinelli sing; the last is a prodigy."

Meanwhile his father was anxious that Lyttelton should return to England as soon as possible. As a Lord of the Admiralty in the Whig government, he was not pleased that his son should travel with the son of a Jacobite, as Sir William Wyndham was; but more than that, he was gradually finding himself unable to bear the huge cost of George's travels. In the winter of 1729, he wrote a long letter to him,

rebuking him for his extravagance. It was kindly in tone, but evidently Sir Thomas felt it imperative to state the truth about his ability to provide his son with the money he needed.

"My dearest George, you have many rare and excellent qualities for which I love you from my soul, and have no pleasure equal to that of making you happy. There is nothing you can wish for in my power to gratify you that an honest man may do, which you may not command; but I have not the wherewithal to support you at this rate, nor do I know which way to procure it, for as I told you in my last, I am already at the end of my tether, and cannot go a step farther without hazard to my honour and good name which you will give me leave to value above all things in the world. . . . I expect that you put yourself into a less expensive way of living, and don't imagine you are to spend your money for the honour of your country abroad which you will find want of when you come home."

Lyttelton replied to this letter from Venice on 13th January, 1730. He assured his father that Charles Wyndham was "a good Whig, as well as a very pretty gentleman." Regarding his extravagance, he humbly wrote: "I receive your lesson of economy as a great and important truth, which I cannot too often set before me, and which I have too much neglected."

A month later, he set out alone for Rome, "unforeseen accident having fixed Wyndham at Venice."<sup>1</sup> He was reluctant to do so, and felt 'quite

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1. Letter of February 11, 1730. I have not been able to find out what the 'unforeseen accident' was. As Lyttelton

alone and very melancholy,' but his father had urged him to hurry through his tour and return to England expeditiously. Lyttelton stayed about three months altogether in Rome, spending a week at Naples. He had planned to "pass the great heats at Milan" and to endeavour to get out of Italy by the end of autumn, as his father "had a mind to see him next summer in England."<sup>1</sup> But this letter crossed one from Sir Thomas bidding him return forthwith. Lyttelton, obedient as ever, wrote back evidently a little disappointed.<sup>2</sup> "Your commands shall always be received with an implicit obedience from me, however contrary they may be to my inclinations. . . . I shall go from Rome with a strong imperfect knowledge of the great variety of fine antiquities that are in it; more time than I have passed here being requisite to see them as one should do. I shall pass through Florence and Bologna, which are the most considerable places where I have not been; and embark at Genoa for Marseilles. I shall expect to find a letter from you at Paris, where I hope to arrive in about six weeks."

Lyttelton's association with Poyntz and Stanhope, in the negotiations that ended in the successful treaty of Seville, had drawn the notice of the Queen to him. "I should be insensible of praise to a fault," he writes, "if I were not proud of the honour Her Majesty does me, so much beyond anything I could flatter myself with the hopes of; but I cannot help being very apprehensive that I shall not answer the

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was very friendly with Wyndham, it is unlikely that they quarrelled.

1. April 12, 1730, from Rome.

2. May 7, 1730, from Rome.

advantageous opinion she has been pleased to entertain of me, from the partial reports of my friends." In this same letter, there is a mention of the "Epistle to Mr. Pope," from Rome, 1730. "If you like the enclosed verses, I desire you would give them to Mr. Pope, to whom I have taken the liberty to address them. They contain a good piece of advice; and I hope it is given in a manner that will make it acceptable. In speaking of Italy, I have confined myself to the decay of learning there, because Mr. Addison has written so very finely upon every other point, in his verses to Lord Halifax, that I durst not think of attempting them after him."

The "Epistle to Pope" exalts him into an immortal bard:

'After so many stars extinct in night,  
The darkened age's last remaining light!'

There is unstinted extravagant praise of Pope in the verses,—a thing easy to understand. Pope was then the greatest of living poets, an acknowledged ruler in the realm of poetry; and Lyttelton had, in the fashion of the time, chosen him as his master and his model. Pope had deigned to correct his 'Progress of Love' and was not displeased to find a clever pupil.

With disarming frankness, Lyttelton ventured to "give a good piece of advice" to his master. The advice, briefly, was that Pope should leave off satire as a poetic form. Lyttelton had a strange feeling that satire was a disreputable form of poetry. Once before he had written to his father, "Nobody can have a higher opinion of his poetry than I have; but

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1. May 7, 1730. Rome.

I am sorry he wrote "*The Dunciad*."<sup>1</sup> It is possible that, bred up in a strict code of honour, he felt that personal attacks in poetry were insufferable. Pope had freely indulged in personal abuse and recriminations. Lyttelton must have felt that poetry was too noble a vehicle for indulgence in scandal and abuse. He ignored the strength and skill of Pope's satire, its keen edge and bitter sting. His sensitive mind dwelt only on its venom and poison. In such a mood he must have thought of the 'good piece of advice.' The exhortation to Pope to leave satire is given as a message from the spirit of Virgil to be delivered to the poet, by Lyttelton:

"To Pope this message from his master bear."

"Great bard, whose numbers I myself inspire,  
To whom I gave my own harmonious lyre,  
If, high exalted on the throne of wit,  
Near me and Homer thou aspire to sit,  
No more let meaner satire dim the rays  
That flow majestic from thy nobler lays."<sup>2</sup>

Pope did not appear hurt by this unsought advice; his good nature and regard for his young pupil allowed him to overlook Lyttelton's presumption.

Lyttelton deplores and laments the fall of art and poetry in Rome:

"Unhappy Italy! whose alter'd state  
Has felt the worst severity of fate;  
Not that barbarian hands her fasces broke,  
And bow'd her haughty neck beneath their  
yoke;

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1. Letter of August 13, 1729, Paris, in which we also learn that 'Mr. Pope' 'enquired after' Lyttelton from his father.

2. The Collected Works, Vol. 3, pp. 97-100 (1776)...

Nor that her palaces to earth are thrown,  
 Her cities desert, and her fields unsown;  
 But that her ancient spirit is decay'd,  
 That sacred wisdom from her bounds is fled,  
 That there the source of science flows no more,  
 Whence its rich streams supplied the world  
 before."

Addison's epistle to Lord Halifax describes more the monuments and sculpture of Rome, the glory of her art and architecture. Lyttelton, resolved not to 'attempt after him' confines himself to the literary aspect of the downfall of Italy, and the eulogy of Pope. Both the poets, however, revert to Britain and her liberty, from the depressing spectacle of ruined Rome, and oppressed Italy. Addison writes:

" 'Tis Liberty that crowns Britannia's Isle,  
 And makes her barren rocks and her bleak  
 mountains smile."

While in Italy,

".....Proud oppression in her valleys reigns,  
 And tyranny usurps her happy plains."

Lyttelton's poem echoes the same sentiments:

" Britain

.....alone can boast

That Liberty, corrupted Rome has lost."

The 'Epistle from Rome' reveals Lyttelton's talent in poetic expression. There is not in him, however, that spark of true genius that every great poet has in him; both Addison's and Lyttelton's verses lack the fire and emotion of Byron's stanzas on Italy in 'Childe Harold.' There is, however, a smoothness and an easy flow in the verses of Lyttelton that invest them with a lingering charm.



“ So in the shades, where, cheered with summer  
rays,

Melodious linnets warbled sprightly lays,  
Soon as the faded, falling leaves complain  
Of gloomy winter's inauspicious reign,  
No tuneful voice is heard of joy or love,  
But mournful silence saddens all the grove.”

The ‘ grand tour ’ was now nearly at an end. The last of Lyttelton's letters to his father from the continent is dated 7th May, 1730, about a little more than two years after he had left home for France. Sir Thomas had found it impossible to support his son for any longer time on his travels. Lyttelton had never been consciously reckless in his expenditure; but carelessness and the necessity of being always well dressed, had led him on occasions into extravagance. Sir Thomas, in spite of himself, was compelled to recall his son home from the tour, before its completion. It is possible that on his way back to England, George passed through Florence and Bologna, as he had desired and planned.<sup>1</sup> It is not known when exactly he reached Hagley, but it would not be wrong to assume that he must have done so about the middle of August.

The European tour was, doubtless, a heavy burden on the family finances at Hagley; but it is obvious that young Lyttelton had derived great benefit and extended his knowledge by experience. In the first instance, he had gathered a good knowledge of French, as his letters in that language show, and possibly he learnt some Italian too. Secondly, his association with Poyntz and later with Stanhope in

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1. Letter of May 7, 1730.

the political negotiations at Soissons and Paris must have given him an insight into the foreign relations and politics of England, not often vouchsafed to young men of his age. He had also gained that aptitude for the observation of men and manners, that is conspicuous in the *Persian Letters*, and his correspondence with his father.

The letters to his father written during this tour are of great interest, and were not unworthy of publication. They record not only the careful observations he made at the various cities he visited, not only the impressions of a new world on a home-bred youth, but also the great love, affection and reverence Lyttelton always bore to his father and mother. Every letter, in its conclusion, has the sincere protestation of his love and duty to his parents. The boldness and freedom of the views he expressed to his father are none the less pleasing. They led him often into hasty opinions, but he was always humble. Confessing his inability to understand the character of Thomas Pitt, his brother-in-law, he writes—"But what are the judgments of young men? Indeed, my dear Sir, we are very silly fellows."<sup>1</sup> The journal of his tour is thus, on the whole, an interesting document; its style is not brilliant, it is not often as personal and intimate as it ought to be, but there are a few character-sketches, and a pleasing narrative that make up for its defects. The absence of humour in general, or of graphic representation, is not unnatural, considering the letters were addressed to his father, and not meant for publication at the time they were written.

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1. February 17, 1729, Paris. P. 240, Vol. 3 of the Collected Works, 1776.

## CHAPTER IV

### LYTTELTON'S ENTRY INTO POLITICS 1730-1735

#### ' THE PERSIAN LETTERS '

On his return to England, Lyttelton began to take an active interest in politics. For many years, he had prepared himself for a career in the House of Commons. He had all the qualifications needed. The eldest son of a member of Parliament and Lord of the Admiralty, he had received his education at Oxford, where, in those days, party politics was a constant topic of keen discussion. The ' Persian Letters ' begun at that University and the letters to his father during the tour, betray an almost unusual interest in the field of politics and administration, on the part of Lyttelton, even while in his teens.

In 1730, about the time of Lyttelton's return to England from the continent, Sir Robert Walpole was in the tenth year of his long administration. A man of conspicuous ability in finance, endowed with a shrewd but narrow character of mind, and a hardy common sense, Walpole had brought peace and commercial prosperity to England. Under his rule, the landed gentry had found contentment, the Church was quiet and the Jacobites were too helpless to stir. He had a solid majority in the House of Commons, and his hold over them was strong and powerful. Thus Walpole's Ministry was apparently a fairly stable one, but it was not difficult to see cracks in it. Signs of growing opposition and of dislike of his ways

were beginning to show themselves. The cause of this was Walpole's intense jealousy of power. This greed of power was the one passion which mastered his common sense, and drove his ablest colleagues out of office. Naturally these became the leaders of a party whose sole aim was to 'compass the fall, the ruin, the impeachment of Walpole.' Thus in 1724, William Pulteney, the brilliant debater, had been superseded, a short time after another able member of the ministry, Carteret, had been compelled by Walpole to surrender office. Townshend left it in 1730 and Chesterfield was to be dismissed three years later.

Carteret and Pulteney, both men of ambition and talent, did not long remain out of office, without planning to form a party whose one object was to oust Walpole from power. In 1726, they were joined by that wonderful genius, Bolingbroke, who bore a deep and lasting personal hatred towards Walpole, who had permanently excluded him from political life in Parliament. Bolingbroke, with his great knowledge of men and affairs, soon became the master-spirit of the opposition to Walpole, and was to remain so for nearly ten years. He fused into one strong opposition the extreme Tories under Wyndham and the 'Malcontent Whigs,' of whom the chief was Pulteney. Bolingbroke's fascinating eloquence and personality, his energy and enthusiasm, kept the opposition united, active and powerful throughout the years between 1726 and 1735. The 'Malcontent Whigs' had a great leader in Pulteney, who shone equally well, whether as an eloquent speaker, a versatile journalist or a fierce pamphleteer. Walpole spoke the truth, when he said he feared Pulteney's tongue more than another man's sword. The 'Craftsman,' to which Lyttelton

later subscribed articles, was started by him under the assumed name of Caleb D'Anvers, and for ten years this weekly journal thundered forth ceaseless indictments against Walpole and his methods of administration.

Lord Cobham, an important member of the Opposition, was instrumental in bringing his nephew Lyttelton into its ranks. Lyttelton, soon after his return from the Continent, used to spend his time with his uncle at Stowe. A palatial residence in the midst of vast grounds ornamented with urns and temples, it was the resort not only of Pope, Hammond, and later, Glover, but also of the opposition—Bolingbroke, Chesterfield, and Pulteney. Here it was that the 'Boy Patriots' and the 'Cobhamites,' as they were called by Walpole, gradually received their political training under the clever guidance of Bolingbroke. The Wests, the Lytteltons, the Grenvilles, Cobham's nephews, and the Pitts, all brilliant young men, met at Stowe the great leaders gathered round him by Cobham. No wonder their ambition carried them into an opposition which had such a galaxy of talent at its command.

About the year 1732, Lyttelton was presented to Frederick, Prince of Wales, who was greatly impressed by his talents and made him his equerry. The Prince was born in 1707, and had received his education in Hanover till his twenty-first year. He had fallen in love with Wilhelmina, the daughter of the King of Prussia, in a rather romantic fashion, but the King, his father, George II, refused his consent to the marriage. A short time after, Frederick was peremptorily summoned to England. From this time he grew to hate his father, and continual irritation

at home soon drove him to the opposition. Here Bolingbroke's fervid eloquence captured his imagination and the Prince was soon intimately associated with the opposition leaders. Bolingbroke and Pulteney hailed him as their patriot king, the ideal sovereign for England in the years to come. The Prince liked being flattered, and affected to patronise not only political talent, but also poetry and the arts. Perhaps it was Lyttelton who induced him successfully to get the poets on his side; or possibly the fact that his father had a supreme contempt for 'Boetry,' and that Walpole, the King's favourite minister, was the "poet's foe," made him extend his protection to literary talent as well.<sup>1</sup> Whatever it was, Pope, as we shall see later, soon became a friend of the Prince, and Thomson, Mallet, Hammond and West his protégés.

The first opportunity for the Opposition to deliver its onslaught on Walpole came in 1733 with the Ministry's Excise Scheme. It was a sound measure, based on good economic grounds; but the Opposition had long waited for a chance to rouse the country against the Minister and they were not going to waste a golden opportunity to play on the fears of the public, and excite them against Walpole. The 'Craftsman'<sup>2</sup> directed its artillery with redoubled

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1. The Marquis of Rockingham in his 'Memoirs' (Vol. 1, p. 204 to 207) says: "Pitt's poetical cousin, Lyttelton, was appointed private secretary to His Royal Highness. George II, could never understand 'what 'Boetry' was good for,' and showed but little favour to the *genus irritabile*. His son Frederick, on the contrary, took them under his especial protection, and they repaid his patronage with the incense of their muse." 'Bob, the poets' foe,'—Swift.

2. 'Craftsman,' No. 348.

vehemence, and dwelt on the "oppressions, insolences and unjustifiable partialities of the Commissioners of Excise." The ignorance of the mass of the people easily led them to believe such attacks on the scheme. Chesterfield and Cobham, though holding offices in the Government, were active propagandists against Walpole. The Prime Minister was alarmed at the Opposition, and the Bill which was introduced in March, 1733, was dropped a month later, as a result of the popular indignation worked up against it. Walpole had his revenge; Chesterfield lost his post and Cobham was dismissed from the command of his regiment. The Opposition, however, had achieved their object, for the time being, and hoped that the General Election, which was to take place the following year, would result in a majority for their party as a result of the campaign. Bolingbroke carried on his attack against Walpole in the 'Craftsman,' in the 'Dissertation on Parties.' The General Election of 1734 was held amidst great excitement. The results of the polling, however, showed a secure, though a diminished, Whig majority for Walpole, and the Opposition failed to defeat the Government.

During these years Lyttelton did not take much part in the activities of the Opposition. He was still a novice there; his work lay more with the Prince of Wales, to whom he also acted as a private secretary doing honorary service. Moreover, politics was not the only interest of Lyttelton. His taste for letters found expression in two or three poetical epistles, and his first prose work of importance, the "Persian Letters," was published in 1735. Of the poems, the first is the "Epistle to Hervey." It was written in 1730, soon after his return from the Continent, ar

it begins with the compliments usual on such occasions. Hervey, who afterwards appears to have taken a strong dislike to his friend, is called :

Favourite of Venus and the tuneful Nine,  
Pollio, by Nature form'd in courts to shine.

The main theme is of the poet's own return from his travels which have failed to 'lull the tumults of the soul.' Novelty and wandering bring no peace of mind; as Goldsmith felt afterwards in his 'Traveller,' almost in the same verses, so did Lyttelton:

In our own hearts the source of pleasure lies,  
Still open, and still flowing to the wise,

\* \* \* \*

So idle, yet so restless are our minds,  
We climb the Alps, and brave the raging winds,  
Through various toils, to seek content we

roam,

Which with but thinking right were ours

at home,

\* \* \* \*

For how should ills, which from our

passions flow,

Be changed by Africk's heat, or Russia's snow?

Happy is he, and he alone, who knows

\* \* \* \*

In generous love of other's good to find

The sweetest pleasures of the social mind,

\* \* \* \*

To nourish pleasing hope, and conquer

anxious fear,

\* \* \* \*

This to no place or climate is confined

But the free native produce of the mind.<sup>1</sup>

1. Compare Goldsmith, *The Traveller*, 1765.



The second poem, the "Advice to a Lady," or "To Belinda," was written in 1731, though published two years later, and is of far greater interest. It extorted great praise from Johnson, and deservedly, for its 'good sense,' smartness and brilliance. "The 'Advice to Belinda' . . . . . though for the most part written when he was very young, contains much truth and much prudence very elegantly and vigorously expressed, and shows a mind attentive to life, and a power of poetry which cultivation might have raised to excellence."<sup>1</sup> The poem is written in a most superior tone, and presumes a great deal on what, in a sense, must have been man's 'divine right' of control over woman in the eighteenth century. To the present-day girl, it would therefore sound a quaint and impudent piece from a half-witted poet. The verse is the heroic couplet and the smartness recalls Pope. The satire is original, though E. Lawrence says that Lyttelton attempted to imitate Young's 'Universal Passion.'<sup>2</sup> There is a slight similarity of ideas between the closing lines of Young's fifth and best satire, "On Women," 1727, and Lyttelton's poem, but there seems to be little real indebtedness on the latter's part to Young.

The poet gives the counsels of a friend to

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Vain, very vain, my weary search to find,  
That bliss which only centres in the mind

Still to ourselves in every place consigned,  
Our own felicity we make or find. . . . .

See also pp. 50-51, *ante*. 'Epistle to Rev. Ayscough from Paris.' 1728.—Lyttelton.

1. *Lives of English Poets*: Ed. G. B. Hill, 1905. Vol. 3, p. 457.

2. E. Lawrence: *Lives of British Historians*, 1855. Vol. 1, p. 368.

Belinda,—“ such truths as women seldom learn from men.” They need it, for

Hard is the fortune that your sex attends,  
Women like princes find few real friends.

First, the subject of taste and elegance is taken up:  
What is your sex's earliest, latest care?

Your heart's supreme ambition? To be fair.  
But mere pains are useless without grace,

How few are lovely, that are made for love!  
and it is essential to have

An elegance of mind as well as of dress.  
There should be ‘ no pretence to dangerous wit ’ but  
just modest sense:

For wit, like wine, intoxicates the brain  
Too strong for feeble woman to sustain,

\* \* \* \*

A *cunning* woman is a *knave*ish fool.  
Seek to be good, but aim not to be great,  
A woman's noblest station is retreat.

\* \* \* \*

One only care your gentle breasts should move,  
The important business of your life is love.  
‘ Hymen's band by Prudence should be tied,’ and  
wealth must be no consideration in marriage. And  
when, after arduous effort, a happy choice is made,  
“ Think not, the husband gained, that all is  
done:

The prize of happiness must still be won:  
And oft, the careless find it to their cost,  
The *lover* in the *husband* may be lost.

\* \* \* \*

Let ev'n your prudence wear the pleasing dress  
Of care for *him*, and anxious *tenderness*.  
From kind concern about his weal or woe,

Let each domestic duty seem to flow.  
 The household sceptre if he bids you bear,  
 Make it your pride his servant to appear,<sup>1</sup>  
 Endearing thus the common acts of life,  
 The *mistress* shall charm him in the *wife*."

The advice in the last lines, as in almost the whole poem, is obviously out of harmony with the position of woman in modern society. Even in those days, it did not pass without comment. Lady Mary Montagu gave a most smart and witty summary of the whole poem in two brilliant lines:

"Be plain in dress, and sober in your diet,  
 In short, my deary, kiss me, and be quiet."

The first important prose work of Lyttelton's is the 'Persian Letters,' or as the full name runs, 'Letters from a Persian in England to his friend at Ispahan,' published in 1735. In 1730, he had written 'Observations on the Reign and Character of Queen Elizabeth,' a book that has always remained in manuscript at Hagley owing to his special desire. The other earlier work, 'Observations on the Life of Cicero,' 1733, is a short essay of no great merit, devoted to the exposition of the dark spots in the character and career of Cicero. It was highly thought of by Joseph Warton,<sup>2</sup> and was reprinted in 1741.

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1. Compare with Pope's lines in the 'Epistle to a Lady, Of the Characters of Women,' ('Moral Essays'):

She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,  
 Or if she rules him, never shows she rules;  
 Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,  
 Yet has her humour most, when she obeys, . . . . .

Apart from these lines, there is nothing in common between Lyttelton's poem and Pope's, which though ready early in 1733, was not published till 1735.

2. Warton preferred its "dispassionate, and impartial character of Tully" to the later and more learned work of

There are a few attempts at aphorisms, the best of which is not without point: "No very ambitious man was ever grateful any further than it was useful to him to be so." The 'Persian Letters' is thus his first achievement in prose of any considerable importance. The work was begun at Oxford in 1728, but a good deal of it was written in 1734, as is evident from the allusion in a letter<sup>1</sup> to the controversy which raged that year between the supporters of the three-year and the seven-year parliaments.

The 'Persian Letters' number about seventy-eight in all. Lyttelton had obviously read and taken as his model the 'Lettres Persanes' of Montesquieu, the English translation of which was first published in 1722. It is probable the 'Turkish Spy' and Defoe's 'Tour through England' also led him to the choice of his theme, but there can be little doubt that Montesquieu was his immediate inspiration. Dr. Anderson says the letters were 'an imitation of those of Montesquieu, whom he had known in England;'<sup>2</sup> Austin Dobson also suggests, probably on the strength of Anderson's statement, that Lyttelton had known the French author in England previous to 1734.<sup>3</sup> It is quite possible that Lyttelton knew him personally, for Montesquieu was in England from October, 1729 to August, 1731,<sup>4</sup> and the former had returned to England about August, 1730. The French author's

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Conyers Middleton, "The History of the Life of M. Tullius Cicero," 1741.

1. Letter No. 65.

2. R. Anderson: *Poets of Great Britain*, Vol. 10, pp. 243-248.

3. *National Review*, June, 1910, p. 598.

4. J. C. Collins: *Voltaire, Rousseau and Montesquieu in England*, 1908, p. 174.

sponsor in Society, moreover, was Chesterfield, whom Lyttelton must have come to know well through his uncle Lord Cobham. Again, Montesquieu had become a great friend of Waldegrave at Paris in 1729, during the negotiations of the Soissons Congress. Lyttelton was in Paris with Poyntz at the time, engaged on the same matter, and may have had an opportunity to cultivate Montesquieu's acquaintance.

While Lyttelton is avowedly inspired by Montesquieu, and has the latter's licentiousness of description in the story-interludes, he is in no sense a slavish imitator. There are occasional touches of vigour and originality; Lyttelton lacks no doubt the delicate mockery and the masterly satire of his model. However, for a young man, barely twenty-five, the expression of sane and forcible views on the problems of State and Society, and the entertaining sketches of individual characters in the 'Persian Letters' have remarkable quality and merit. The imitation of Montesquieu is plain enough in the similarity of themes—the mock epitaph on the businessman in Lyttelton, and the diner-out in the French author, the strictures on the Law Courts, and the madness of proselytism, the plea for tolerance, the analysis and dissection of political parties, their leaders and their aims, of the Government and political history of each country, the Troglodytes, the coffee-house haunters and so forth. A detailed examination is thus unnecessary. The fact of his imitation is by no means a discredit to Lyttelton. Goldsmith, far superior to Lyttelton in his gracefulness, humour and touch of genius, is, in his material and outward form, equally imitative of Montesquieu in the 'Citizen of the World,' and even of Lyttelton, in some respects, as

will be shown later. The ability of Lyttelton lies in his adaptation of Montesquien's scheme to English life, customs and politics, in the boldness, originality, and frankness of his views. His style has no marked distinction or quality; it is not cumbrous, it has a rough strength, but at the same time it has neither the sweet grace nor the easy flow of the style of his Irish successor in the 'Chinese Letters.'

In the Preface, or 'Letter to the Publisher,' Lyttelton states his object in giving to the world the observations of a Persian, 'so foreign and out of the way.' "As there is a pleasure in knowing how things *here* affect a foreigner, though his conceptions of them be ever so extravagant, I think you may venture to expose them to the eyes of the world; the further because it is plain the man who wrote them is a lover of liberty, and must be supposed more impartial than our own countrymen, when they speak of their own admired customs and favourite opinions." The letters are all supposed to be written by Selim, a traveller from Persia came to stay in England, to his friend Mirza at Ispahan to gratify the latter's thirst for knowledge. He promises to apply himself, 'principally to study the English Government.' Moreover, "Whatever in the manners of this people appear to me to be *singular* and *fanatical*, I will also give thee some account of . . . ."

In accordance with his first object, Selim devotes a number of the letters to a description of the growth of society, political institutions, and government, and the history of the English constitution. The Troglo-dytes cover about ten letters<sup>1</sup> and their history is

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1. Letters 10-21.

given "to shew by what steps, and through what changes, the original good of Society was overturned, and mankind became wickeder and more miserable in a state of Government, than they were when left in a state of nature." The growth of law and equity is said to have risen from that of property and individual wealth. "From this (property) grew up a thousand mischiefs—pride, envy, avarice, discontent and violence."<sup>1</sup> The multiplicity of laws is severely condemned. "If subtleties and distinctions are admitted to constitute right, they will equally be made use of to evade it: and if justice is turned into a science, injustice will soon be made a trade."<sup>2</sup> From law, Lyttelton turns to religion, and describes its vicissitudes, the oligarchy of priests, and the rise of dogmatism. He deals next with the 'divine right of Kings,' and the unenviable increase of luxury and corruption in an absolute monarchy. As Goldsmith does later, Lyttelton laments that a 'thousand wants were created every day, which nature neither suggested nor could supply.'<sup>3</sup> Commenting on the influx of foreign doctors and quacks come to cure the ailments of the wealthier members of Society, who revelled in surfeit, Lyttelton remarks acidly: 'The only advantage was, that those who had learned to live at a great expense, now found the secret of dying at a greater.'<sup>4</sup> The history of the Troglodytes ends with a well-drawn picture of Lyttelton's Utopia and the gospel of Whiggism.<sup>5</sup> Fifteen letters towards the

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1. Letter No. 11.
  2. No. 12.
  3. Letter No. 17.
  4. *Ibid.*
  5. No. 19.

end of the book are devoted to a history of the English Government and Constitution, and the conflict of Parliament with the Crown,' Lyttelton held decidedly Whig and radical views, and he expressed himself forcibly on every occasion.<sup>2</sup> 'If the privileges of the people of England,' he says in one place, 'be *concessions* from the crown, is not the power of the crown itself a *concession* from the people?' Lyttelton delivers a remarkable verdict on Cromwell. ". . . . By an uncommon appearance of zeal, by great address, and great valour, he first inflamed the spirit of liberty into *extravagance*, and afterwards duped and awed it into *submission*. He trampled on the laws of the nation, but he raised the glory of it, and it is hard to say which he deserved most, a *halter* or a *crown*."<sup>3</sup> In another letter commenting on

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1. Letters 57-66 and 70-75.

2. According to J. Chambers (Biographical Illustrations of Worcestershire, 1820), the freedom of Lyttelton's views in the 'Persian Letters' is said to have been one cause of his failure in the Parliamentary election in 1741. The clergy are said to have strongly disapproved of Lyttelton's work. Dr. Warton, in the 'Essay on the Genius of Pope' (Vol. 2, pp. 312-4), says that Lyttelton towards the end of his life intended to throw out of all his work his first performance, the 'Persian Letters'. . . . in which he said "there were principles and remarks he wished to retract and alter." It is curious to hear that Montesquieu expressed the same opinion in his old age: "He found his daughter, one day, with the 'Persian Letters' in her hand. 'Let it alone, my child,' he said to her, 'It is a work of youth unsuited to you.'" (See Introduction to Routledge's Edition, 1923.)

A letter from Lyttelton to Warburton (of uncertain date, but probably 1744), refers to a 'New Edition' of the 'Persian Letters' with 'considerable corrections,' made to spare 'offence against the clergy.' The book as a whole, he said, is and must be 'of a *critical* nature.' See the Correspondence of W. Warburton, ed. F. Kilbert, 1841, pp. 213-14.

3. Letter No. 61.



'visionary schemes' for a permanent constitution acceptable to the English people, Lyttelton says: "I have always thought of them . . . . as of chimerical projects to render a man *immortal*; such a *grand elixir* cannot be found, and those who would *tamper* with states, in the hopes of procuring them that *immortality*, are the most unfit to prescribe to them of all men in the world."

In many respects thus, he is an advanced thinker, and his bitterly satiric letter on 'Treaty learning' has almost a modern tone. Secret treaties and long-delayed negotiations are a danger to peace. Open treaties are more often than not, ineffective. "The last appeal is to the *iniquitous rule of force*; and princes treat by the mouths of their great guns which soon demolish all the *paper* on both sides, and tear to pieces every *cobweb of negotiations*."<sup>1</sup>

Three of the letters deal with the elections and election scenes in England. The prevalence of bribery, corruption, drunkenness, and disorder come in for a full share of the young Whig's satire. "When I came to the town where I was to lodge, I found the streets all crowded with men and women, who gave me a lively idea of the ancient Bacchanals. Instead of ivy they carried oaken boughs, were exceedingly drunk and mutinous, but at the same time, mighty zealous for religion."<sup>2</sup> "I asked if they had no laws against corruption. Yes, said he, very strong ones: but corruption is stronger than the laws. If the magistrates in Persia were to sell wine, it would signify very little that your law forbids the

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1. Letter No. 71.

2. Letter No. 52.

drinking of it.'"<sup>1</sup> A well-deserved commentary on the Peachums and the trading justices of Lyttelton's day.

While Lyttelton's comments on the law's delays and vexations, and the corruption in administration, are bitter and provokingly severe, he is not blind to the essential virtues of the English nation and the legal guarantees of the rights of Englishmen. The supremacy of England can be only on the sea; unlike Antaeus, "the English are *the sons of the sea*, and while they adhere to their mother are invincible."<sup>2</sup> There are two letters at the end of the book, one dwelling on the faults of the English Government in the administration of finance and law, the other on the essential qualities of the English people. The Persian is made to speak of the 'good sense, sincerity, and good nature . . . . . among the English,' 'Of their *industry*, their commerce is a proof; and for their valour, let their *enemies* declare it.'<sup>3</sup> The rest of the 'Persian Letters' are devoted to character sketches, and comments on Society and its institutions and customs in England. An epitaph on a 'man of business' has almost a modern touch. "Here lies . . . . . who lived three score and ten years in a continual hurry. He had the honour of sitting in six parliaments, of being chairman of twenty-five committees, and of making three hundred and fifty speeches. He attended constantly twice a week at the levées of twelve different ministers of State; and writ for and against them one thousand papers. He composed fifty new projects for the better government

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1. No. 53.

2. No. 50.

3. Letter No. 78.

of the Church and State. He left behind him memoirs of his own life in five volumes in folio.

Reader, if thou shouldst be moved to drop a tear for the loss of so *considerable a person*, it will be a *singular* favour to the deceased, for nobody else concerns himself about it, or remembers that such a man was ever born.”<sup>1</sup>

The Italianate Englishmen, who, though the dullest fellows in their country, become perfect virtuosi after foreign travel, come in for a good deal of ridicule.<sup>2</sup> So also the Society lady, with her receptions and protégés; and the parasites that hover in fashionable saloons, “fellows, who without a grain of sense or merit, make their way by reciprocally complimenting one another. They neither *bark nor bite*, but *cringe and fawn*; so that neither good manners nor humanity will allow one to kick them out, till at last they acquire a sort of right by sufferance.”

There is an entertaining account in one letter of a ‘*good-natured man*,’ at a social reception. “The colonel ran up to him and embracing him very tenderly, ‘My dear Jack,’ said he, ‘thou shalt be drunk with me to-night.’ ‘You know I have been ill,’ said the other gently, ‘and drinking does not agree with me.’ ‘No matter for that,’ replied the colonel, ‘you must positively be drunk before you sleep; for I am disappointed of my company, and will not be reduced either to drink myself, or to go to bed sober.’ The *good-natured man* could not resist such obliging solicitations; he kindly agreed to the proposal and all the room expressed their apprehen-

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1. No. 25.

2. No. 32.

sion that his *good nature* would be the death of him some time or other.”<sup>1</sup>

At the Opera, the Persian comments on the lack of taste and decency in some of the actors. He is astonished to hear his neighbour tell him that there is the party spirit even in music. “It is a rule with us to judge of nothing by our senses and understanding; but to hear and see and think, only as we chance to be differently engaged.”<sup>2</sup> The Persian then complains that he is quite unmoved by the music; his neighbour’s reply is worth quoting:—“Do but *fancy it moving*, and you will soon be moved as much as others. It is a trick you may learn when you will, with a little pains; we have most of us learnt it in our turns.”

The brutality of the bear-garden is another theme touched upon. “The pleasure was, to see the animals worry and gore one another, and the men give and receive many wounds.” A Frenchman watching the spectacle disapproves of the ‘sanguinary disposition of the English exhibited in their loud and excited approval of the entertainment!’<sup>3</sup> Then there is an amusing description of the frequent card-parties that eighteenth century Society so often indulged in.

“I was the other day in a house where I saw a sight very strange to a Persian. There was a number of tables in the room round which were placed several sets of men and women. They seemed wonderfully intent upon some *bits of painted paper*, which they held in their hands. I imagined, at first, that they were performing some magical ceremony,

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1. Letter No. 33.

2. Letter No. 2.

3. Letter No. 3.

and that the figures I saw traced on the bits of paper were a mystical talisman or charm. What more confirmed me in this belief was the grimaces and distortions of their countenances, much like those of our magicians in the act of conjuring; but enquiring of the gentleman that introduced me, I was told that they were at *play* and that this was the favourite diversion of both sexes . . . . But, I see no signs of mirth among them, I answered; if they are merry, why do they not laugh or sing or jump about? If I may judge of their hearts by their looks, half of these *revellers* are ready to hang themselves. That may be, said my friend; for very likely they are losing more than they are worth.”<sup>1</sup>

The Persian has cynical views on the so-called ‘platonic love,’ and is shocked to learn of the mercenary considerations behind marriage. He tries to marry an Englishwoman, and hearing of all the stipulations about jointure and allowance, he cries out, “No . . . by Hali—I will never wed a woman who is so determined to *rebel* against her husband, that she *articles* for it in the very contract of her marriage.”<sup>2</sup>

Lyttelton held advanced views on press censorship:—“In a free country, the press may be very useful as long as it is under no partial restraint. . . . To argue against any branch of liberty from the ill use that may be made of it, is to argue against liberty itself, since all is capable of being abused.” “Against such abuses of the press the laws have provided a remedy; and let the laws take their course . . . . Such arbitrary practices (of oppressive censorship) no

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1. Letter No. 5.

2. Letters No. 6 and 22.

provocation can justify, no precedents warrant, no dangers excuse."<sup>1</sup> On the educational system of the day, with its undue insistence on the classics, Lyttelton is severe. "The whole purpose of their education is to acquire some Greek and Latin words; . . . if they are backward in this, they are pronounced dunces." "It were far better," Lyttelton suggests, "that they should learn to speak English with grace and elegance, and be thoroughly acquainted with their own national history and political constitution."<sup>2</sup> The Persian, commenting on the great number of English youths who got no benefit from foreign travel, but only learnt newer fashions and vices, says: "Were I to go to Persia, with an English coat, an English footman, and an English *cough*, it would amount to just the improvement made in France by one half of the youth who travel thither. Add to these a taste for music, with two or three terms of building and of painting,—and you are an accomplished gentleman."<sup>3</sup>

In one letter, there is a tribute to Pope for his spirit of independence. "We have a very great poet now alive, who may boast of one glory to which no member of the French Academy can pretend,—that he never flattered any man *in power*, but he has bestowed immortal praises upon *those*, whom for fear of offending men *in power*, if they lived in France, under the same circumstances, no poet there would have dared to praise."<sup>4</sup>

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1. Letter No. 48.
  2. No. 46.
  3. Letter No. 46.
  4. No. 28.

'The Persian Letters' must have created a sensation when it was first published. It became immediately popular, for there were four editions in one year and a fifth in 1744. After Lyttelton's death it was reprinted in Harrison's British Classics and it was thrice translated into French, in 1735, 1761 and 1775. The secret of Lyttelton's success in England was his almost novel design, the boldness of his opinions and the freshness of treatment. No doubt, twenty-five years later Goldsmith eclipsed him completely in the "Chinese Letters"; yet Goldsmith himself must have probably been indebted to Lyttelton in his material. A close reading reveals a similarity of themes dealt with by the authors, and in the descriptions of the gambling parties and the law courts, in his views on the expenses and delays of law-suits, and the mercenary nature of the marriage bond, Goldsmith followed in the steps, not of Montesquieu so much as of Lyttelton. The story of the Chinese philosopher's son and the beautiful captive in the "Citizen of the World" bears a strong resemblance to that of Abdalla in the "Persian Letters." Again, Lyttelton's account of the Troglodytes probably led Goldsmith to write about the 'Rise and Decline of the Kingdom of Lao.' Miss Conant draws attention to one instance<sup>1</sup> where Goldsmith has made a copy almost word by word of a passage in the "Persian Letters"; only a fit of unusual laziness can have induced Goldsmith to resort to such a device. Miss

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1. Compare 'Persian Letters,' No. 14 with the 'Citizen of the World,' Letter 77. See M. P. Conant, 'The Oriental Tale in England,' 1908, p. 190 and also H. J. Smith, 'The Citizen of the World—A Study,' 1926.

Conant's conclusion, that Goldsmith undoubtedly utilised Lyttelton's 'Persian Letters,' is therefore based on good grounds, and E. Lawrence says with some justification: "They (Persian Letters) probably gave rise to Goldsmith's 'Citizen of the World,' and by their popularity led that delightful writer to imitate and surpass them."<sup>1</sup> The humour, fancy and genius of Goldsmith accomplished a far greater work on the coarse material that Lyttelton gave than the 'Persian Letters.' Lyttelton's style has none of the easy grace and felicity of Goldsmith's; if it is plain, it is not without vigour and strength, and is tolerably good without any particular distinction. There are a few good illustrations and figures of speech in the letters, of which one has become popular and has been often quoted. Lyttelton says of the supplies granted by the Commons to the Government: "When these gifts are most liberal, they have a natural tendency like plentiful exhalations drawn from the earth, to fall again upon the place from whence they came."<sup>2</sup>

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1. E. Lawrence: *Lives of the British Historians*, 1855. Vol. 1, pp. 365-384.  
 2. Letter No. 38.



## CHAPTER V

### OPPOSITION POLITICS, 1735-42: MARRIAGE

Lyttelton was not a candidate at the General Election of 1734. The next year, however, in April, he was returned to Parliament at Oakhampton, in place of one William North, deceased.<sup>1</sup> Okehamp-ton, as it is now spelt, was a pocket borough of his brother-in-law, Thomas Pitt, and it was therefore a comparatively easy task for Lyttelton to get himself elected to the House of Commons. William Pitt, too, the younger brother of Thomas Pitt, was elected in a similar manner at Old Sarum, another pocket borough.<sup>2</sup> Both joined the Opposition in Parliament, which resumed its attacks on Walpole with greater force than ever.

Meanwhile, the Prince of Wales, Lyttelton's master, was drawn more and more into the Opposition. Bolingbroke had made him in theory the Ideal Prince who alone could make England happy, and Pulteney had preached this in successive issues of the 'Craftsman.' The younger members of the Opposition were convinced by Bolingbroke's eloquence, and they sincerely believed in the idea. The Prince was young and generous, his manners were pleasing, and he was not without taste for art and literature. His defects, weakness, vanity and trickiness, were not at the time apparent, and his vices were the vices of the period. The young Whigs, a

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1. Gentleman's Magazine, April, 1735.

2. Gentleman's Magazine, March, 1735.

leading figure among whom was Lyttelton who knew the Prince intimately, hoped that he would come up to the ideal which Bolingbroke had created, and sedulously brought to his notice the leading writers of the day, so that he might be considered a patron of letters, and achieve popularity in a direction in which his father had none.

Pope was naturally the poet whose help the Opposition was most anxious to secure. The task did not present many difficulties. Pope was then much under the influence of Bolingbroke, as the "Essay on Man" clearly shows, and Lyttelton, his ardent admirer and friend, was, moreover, secretary to the Prince. In the summer of 1735, he had stayed at Stowe with Cobham, one of the leaders of the Opposition and Lyttelton and West were also there.<sup>1</sup> A short time after, the Prince must have been urged strongly, either by Bolingbroke or Lyttelton, to bestow on Pope the honour of a visit. The first notice of their meeting is to be found in a letter from the poet to Bathurst, of October 8, 1735: "I was three days since surprised by a favour of His Royal Highness, an unexpected visit of four or five hours."<sup>2</sup>

In the following year, on the 27th April, the Prince married the Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha. Three days later Parliament presented an Address to the King on the occasion of the marriage. It was this that gave Pitt, Lyttelton and Grenville the chance to make their maiden speeches on the Address. The 'Young Patriots,' as they called themselves, spoke

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1. See letter from Pope to Bathurst, August, 6, 1735. (Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 8, p. 347.)

2. Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 5, p. 312.

remarkably well, and while ostensibly protesting their loyalty to the Throne, made a covert attack on the King and Queen, who had strongly disapproved of the marriage. Lyttelton's speech drew attention as a well-made effort, but Pitt's was more powerful and sarcastic.<sup>1</sup> "We must muzzle this terrible young Cornet of the Horse," Walpole said, and Pitt was summarily dismissed from the Cornetship of the Cobham Horse Regiment. Lyttelton wrote a poem on the occasion, saying:

"Long thy virtues marked thee out for fame,  
Far, far superior to a cornet's name;  
This generous Walpole saw and grieved to find,  
So mean a post disgrace that noble mind.  
The servile standard from the free-born hand  
He took and bade thee lead the patriot band."<sup>2</sup>

Lyttelton was then a more well-known figure in the public eye than Pitt, whose talent was still unrecognised, even in his own circle. It reflects credit on Lyttelton's powers of observation, that he should have been able to discover the real greatness and powers of Pitt, and to predict the glorious career before him. Pitt, freed from his post in the Government, made himself an active member of the Opposition, and the Prince of Wales, taking him into his favour, appointed him a Groom of the Bed-chamber in his household. Lyttelton was now the trusted counsellor of the Prince, and there are two or three letters in his correspondence written to his Royal Master, which show him as an honest and fearless adviser on all matters that needed the Prince's

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1. See Cobbett's *Parliamentary History of England*, 1811, Vol. 9, pp. 1223-1224.

2. See *Complete Works*, 1776, Vol. 3, p. 197.

attention. There is one on the subject of the increased allowance the Prince asked for from the King, consequent on his marriage.<sup>1</sup> Lyttelton was strongly against the scheme, and did not hesitate to tell the Prince so; he pointed out that the Prince must be economical in his ways, and set an example to his future subjects, who would certainly be discontented against the Throne if they thought he demanded a huge allowance for his personal comfort. The Prince evidently did not much like this outburst of advice from Lyttelton, but for some time no breach took place between them. He took his advice, but for different reasons, and did not press his demand immediately.

The Opposition, however, was not averse to making the question of the allowance a resolution for debate, in order to widen the gulf between the Prince and his father. In the winter of that year, they met at Bath to consider the matter, and to decide on the plan of action to be followed at the next session of Parliament. Bath, thereafter, for the next few years, became the centre of activities of the Opposition leaders during the recess. The Prince came there, and most of the nobility and the fashionable world. Opposition politicians like Carteret, Pulteney, Chesterfield, and Lyttelton, as also Pitt and Grenville, planned their Parliamentary campaigns, and strategic moves, and at the same time improved their health. Lyttelton suffered often from cold and rheumatism, and sought to recover health by spending a few weeks at the "healing and beneficent" waters of Bath. The famous and eccentric Dr. Cheyne<sup>2</sup> was

1. See letter of 12th October, 1735. Phillimore, pp. 74-78.

2. Dr. George Cheyne or Cheyney, 1671-1743. For a

the consulting physician of most of the notables, and many a time the subject of amusing passages in his patients' letters. On December 4th, Lyttelton wrote to Pope, who was not far away from Bath, staying probably with Allen at Prior Park: "I can hardly think of being ever ill again, after drinking down health another month. . . . The immortal Doctor Cheyney desires his compliments to you and bids me tell you that he shall live at least two centuries, while such gluttonous pretenders to philosophy as you, Dr. Swift, and my Lord Bolingbroke die of eating and drinking at four-score. The Doctor is the greatest singularity and the most delightful I ever met with. I am not his patient, but am to be his disciple, and to see a manuscript of his which comprehends all that is necessary, salutary or useful, either for the body or the soul!"<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton also expressed his anxiety as to Pope's health, as he had heard reports that the great poet was not doing well.

Pope replied eight days after, in a letter which gives us one more proof of the just and honest, but ill-concealed pride he took in his achievement as a poet—an independence of living, reached through the patronage of none other than the general public.

"I write to you soon, because it will please you to hear that I am not ill, nor ill at ease; either my

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description of Bath and its personalities about this period see, Barbeau, A: *Life and Letters at Bath in the Eighteenth Century* . . . with a preface by Austin Dobson, 1904, and Melville (Lewis): *Bath under Beau Nash and after*. 1926.

1. Pope's works: ed. Elwin and Courthope. Vol. 9, pp. 169-171. (4th December, 1736). The MS. was probably of "An Essay on Regimen: with five discourses, Moral, Philosophical, and Medical," published in 1740.

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Lord Cornbury mistook my letter, or you him. I think that ever since I was a poet, nay, ever since I have ceased to be one, I have not experienced so much quiet as at this place. Though I let the world alone, from my very entrance into it, I find as much envy and opposition, as if my ambition had designed me to overturn it; and since I chanced to succeed in my own low walk, as much solicitation and low flattery as if I had places and preferments to bestow, I never deserved or desired either. If I deserve anything, it is a constancy to my first general philosophical principles, a general benevolence, and fixed friendships, whenever I have had the luck to know any honest meritorious men. I am yours by every tie; few have or ought to have so great a share of me; if I say two or three more, I should correct myself, and say rather one or two. Were it not for a hankering ('tis a good expressive English word) after these, I could live with honest Mr. Allen all my life."

After this declaration of friendship for Lyttelton, Pope continued: "Though I enjoy deep quiet, I can't say I have much pleasure or even any object that obliges me to smile, except Dr. Cheyney, who is yet so very a child in true simplicity of heart that I love him as he loves Don Quixote, for the most moral and reasoning madman in the world . . . He is in Scripture language an *Israelite in whom there is no guile*, or in Shakespeare's *as foolish a good kind of Christian creature* as one shall meet with."<sup>1</sup>

On the 17th December, the Prince received the

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1. Pope's Works: Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 9, pp. 171-72, 12th December, 1736.



freedom of the city, and in Lyttelton's next letter to Pope, dated the 22nd, there is a reference to this event: "I am now so recovered," he wrote, "that I grow impatient to get away from Bath; you need not be told that the desire of seeing you is one great cause of that impatience, but to shew you how much I am master of my passions, I will be quiet for a week or ten days or longer and then come to you in the most outrageous spirits and upset you like Bounce, when you let her loose after a regimen of physic and confinement. I am very glad His Royal Highness has received two such honourable presents at a time, as a whelp of *hers*, and the freedom of the city. Mr. Grenville, who is very much recovered, and Mr. Hammond, who is the joy and dread of Bath, join in the compliments to you, which are most affectionate."<sup>1</sup> Pope was thus already a good friend of the Prince. The dog Pope had presented him was, no doubt, the one for whose collar he wrote the interesting inscription:

"I am his Royal Highness's dog at Kew,  
Pray tell me, Sir, whose dog are you?"

In the same year, 1736, Lyttelton made the acquaintance of Shenstone, his neighbour at Hagley Hall. William Shenstone (1714-1763), the poet, was born at Halesowen, Hagley, where his father was the church-warden. He was a student for some time at the local grammar school, and later at Pembroke College, Oxford, where he was a contemporary of Johnson. His mother was co-heir with her father, William Penn, of Harborough Hall, Hagley. On the death of his mother in 1732, he returned to Hagley

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1. Pope's Works, Vol. 9, pp. 173-74.

and remained at the Leasowes with his uncle and guardian, Thomas Wolman, till 1745, when he inherited the Leasowes, (originally bought by his grandfather), on the death of his guardian. The account of Shenstone's first interview with Lyttelton is given by Graves in his "Reminiscences of Shenstone."

"On a fine evening, about the year 1736, I think, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Lyttelton, with Mr. Thomas Pitt, (Lord Chatham's eldest brother) rode over for the first time, and visited Mr. Shenstone at the Leasowes. Mr. Lyttelton, though then in Parliament, and a rising young man, conversed with great freedom and familiarity, and gave Mr. Shenstone a general invitation to dine at Hagley, whenever he found it agreeable . . . . The conversation turned chiefly on literary subjects . . . . As Mr. Shenstone had at this time done nothing at the Leasowes worth notice, Mr. Lyttelton's was probably a visit of mere curiosity, Mr. Shenstone being just returned from the University, and began to be known in the neighbourhood as a young man of parts and ingenuity. Mr. Lyttelton took his leave with politely repeating his invitation to Hagley; of which, however, through mere diffidence, Mr. Shenstone, for the present, rarely availed himself; but whenever he, some years after, visited at Hagley upon a freer footing, he was received by the family with the utmost politeness, and by Mr. Lyttelton and his lady, particularly, in the most friendly manner and with the utmost attention, as they saw under a plain and bashful appearance, his intrinsic and real merit."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Recollections of some Particulars in the Life of the late William Shenstone, Esq., 1788. R. Graves, pp. 78-79.

Lyttelton's friendship with the shy and gentle poet of the 'Leasowes' grew in time into a genuine friendship. Towards the end of Shenstone's life, however, it was marred by certain misunderstandings, brought about, as we shall see later, by ill-natured reports and gossip.

In politics, a situation, set with trouble for Walpole, was slowly developing. Early in 1737, the Opposition decided on supporting the Prince's demand for an increase in his allowance. Pulteney proposed a resolution to that effect in the Commons on the 22nd February, and made a good speech in support of the motion. But his oratory was wasted; Walpole's supporters were in the majority, and the motion was defeated. In his own words, Walpole 'fought dagger out of sheath,' and won the day. Curiously enough, Lyttelton spoke and voted for the enhanced allowance. It is hard to resolve whether he went back on his written sentiments of the previous year to accommodate his Royal master, or whether he decided to sacrifice his own opinion for that of his party of which he was now a prominent member.

In the summer of the year, an event took place which completed the drift between the King and his eldest son. On the 31st of July, while the Royal family was at Hampton Court, the Princess of Wales felt the pains of child-birth; the Prince immediately and without informing anyone, put her into a chaise and drove her in a hurry to St. James, where the same night she was delivered of a daughter. It was an act of spite, little called for and wantonly carried out by the Prince. He later begged for pardon from his father, but the King was in a terrible rage. The Queen called her son 'an insolent, impertinent fool,'

and the King a worse name. As a severe measure, the King signed an order forbidding all persons in the Prince's employ access to His Majesty's Court. As a result, many of Frederick's servants resigned, amongst whom was James Pelham, his official secretary. Lyttelton was offered and accepted the post vacated by Pelham.<sup>1</sup>

In the autumn of the same year, the Queen fell dangerously ill. It was a common belief at the time, and true to a certain extent also, that Walpole was a favourite of hers and that it was the Queen's influence that had made George II retain Walpole as his minister so long. The Opposition shared this belief too, and now calculated on the chances of her decease, and its effects in reducing Walpole's power. Lyttelton, as an important member of the Opposition, received letters from Chesterfield at Bath, discussing the campaign that was to follow should the Queen succumb to her illness. These letters betray the callous scheming nature, and the uncanny sense of strategy in party politics, that Chesterfield retained to the end of his life. The letters are excellent reading, and give us a clear glimpse into the intricate mysteries of party warfare in the days of George II. It is not possible to quote them, owing to their length. Chesterfield grows almost jubilant over the fall of Walpole, which he hoped would be the inevitable result of the death of the Queen, an event fast approaching, but still to take place. The letter of November 15th, 1737, after a detailed discussion, ends with a postscript—"Pray lay me at His Royal Highness's feet, but without showing this letter, which

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1. August, 1737.

is in too free a style." But on a separate sheet of paper, in his characteristic way, Chesterfield wrote: "I add this to my other letter to tell you that notwithstanding the postscript, you may shew it to the Prince or not, as you think proper; if you would have him see it, make a seeming difficulty at first, and make him force you at last . . . . . We have a prospect of the Claude Lorraine kind before us, while Sir Robert's has all the horrors of Salvator Rosa. If the Prince would play the Rising Sun, he would gild it finely, if not, he will be under a cloud, which he will never be able hereafter to shine through. Instill this into the *Woman*."<sup>1</sup> The 'Woman' was either the Princess of Wales, or Lady Archibald Hamilton, who had considerable influence over the Prince.

The activities of the Opposition increased during the year. On February 5, 1737, Chesterfield and Lyttelton established a new weekly newspaper to supplement the 'Craftsman,' as an organ of their party. They called it 'Common Sense or the Englishman's Journal,' a name taken from Fielding, according to Prof. W. L. Cross.<sup>2</sup> It was about this time that Fielding, too, began his association with the Opposition. It was a natural step he took, seeing that Lyttelton and Pitt, who were both his schoolmates at Eton, were now in its front rank. Since Walpole had little use for men of letters, it was no wonder they sought their fortunes in the ranks of a party whose cause had been almost openly taken up

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1. Phillimore: *Memoirs*, p. 92.

2. "History of Henry Fielding"—W. L. Cross, Vol. 1, p. 218.

by Pope. The "Historical Register for 1736" contains a violent attack by Fielding on Walpole and the prevalent corruption in the ministry. "Pasquin," published a year before, contains a similar attack on the Government. It is not unlikely that in 1736 or 1737 he revived the friendship begun at school fifteen years before with Lyttelton and Pitt.

Another recruit to the party was Richard Glover, the young merchant with a taste for literature, and the author of "Leonidas," a poem once rated high and now well-nigh forgotten even by the student of literature. A long epic poem in blank verse, anti-Walpolian in tone, it became considerably popular and gained for its author praise from Lyttelton in the "Common Sense" and from Fielding in the "Champion." It was inscribed to Cobham, and it was more or less written actively on behalf of the Opposition to Walpole. Lyttelton goes into raptures over the poem in his anonymous letter to the "Common Sense." "This author has found out that strength of thought and majesty of expression may be reconciled to purity of diction and grammatical exactness, nay to an ease and simplicity of style."<sup>1</sup> After this follows what Phillimore rightly calls, "a profane comparison" of Glover to Milton. In his ecstasy, Lyttelton writes: "From understanding Leonidas, I quickly came to like it, and the more I read, the more I wondered, the more I found myself delighted, animated, moved." Later he addressed a highly eulogistic poem to Glover on his 'Leonidas.'

There is no doubt that Lyttelton's praise of Glover in this essay is indiscriminate and full of

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1. Published in 1737.

2. April 9, 1737. Complete Works, Vol. 1, p. 393.

violent exaggeration, when we consider the fate of "Leonidas" and its present obscurity. It is, however, necessary to remember that in its own day, it easily passed through three editions, that it extorted praise from Fielding, and that its popularity made Swift exclaim in a letter to Pope: "Who is this Mr. Glover who writ 'Leonidas' which is reprinting here, and hath great vogue?" To-day Leonidas is an unknown poem, rarely read and all but forgotten; the fame of Glover rests on a single ballad, "Hosier's Ghost."

More deserving of patronage and help was James Thomson, the Scottish poet, who received this year a pension of a hundred pounds along with Mallet and West, from the Prince of Wales, through the intercession of Lyttelton, now the Prince's official secretary.

James Thomson was born at Ednam in Roxburghshire in September, 1700. When he had picked up the rudiments of knowledge at the parish school, he was sent to Jedburgh. He received, at the Abbey, an education in the classics that ultimately drove him to rebel against them. In the summer of 1715, he was sent to Edinburgh University. He had written verses at home, but had never been satisfied with them and had thrown them into the fire. At Edinburgh, he diverted himself amidst his classical studies with reading Spenser and Milton. He wrote two or three poems, while at the University, and they were published in a local magazine. After his stay at the University, he tried to enter the Ministry, but gave it up when his examiners in Theology did not approve of his thesis. He then fell back upon literature as his profession and finding no encourage-

ment at Edinburgh, left that city and came to London in 1725. One of his earliest patrons was Dodington, to whom was dedicated "Summer" in 1727. It is not yet known how and when Lyttelton came to know Thomson. Murdoch, who wrote a biographical introduction to the 'Works of Thomson,' published in 1768, says: "His chief dependence during this long interval was on the protection and bounty of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales; who, upon the recommendation of Lord Lyttelton, then his chief favourite, settled on him a handsome allowance . . . . A circumstance, which does equal honour to the patron and the poet, ought not here to be omitted; that my Lord Lyttelton's recommendation came altogether unsolicited, and long before Mr. Thomson was personally known to him."<sup>1</sup> Mr. A. H. Thompson suggests that "the acquaintance thus formed (with Dodington) probably led to his friendship with George Lyttelton and his adhesion to the political party which supported the Prince of Wales."<sup>2</sup> This is probable, as the poem "Liberty" (1734-36) is dedicated to the Prince of Wales, and the drama 'Agamemnon,' 1738, inscribed to the Princess of Wales. That he had probably not known Lyttelton in person before 1735, however, is seen from his letter to Dr. Cranton of August, 1735, in which he says, "One Mr. Lyttelton, a young gentleman, and member of Parliament, wrote the 'Persian Letters.' They are reckoned prettily done."<sup>3</sup> William Bayne

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1. The Works of James Thomson with the Life of the Author, by P. Murdoch, 1768, p. xiv.

2. The Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol. 10, p. 94.

3. Thomson—G. C. Macaulay, p. 39.



suggests that the introduction came through Pope.<sup>1</sup>

From 1727 to 1737, however, he was fairly well off, under the patronage of Sir Charles Talbot, later Lord Chancellor, to whose son he was tutor till 1734, and by whom he was appointed Clerk of the Briefs after the death of his pupil. In the spring of 1737, his patron died, and Thomson, losing his berth, fell into great difficulties. It was probably about this time that Lyttelton, though not known in person to Thomson, "recommended him to the favour of the Prince of Wales, to whom 'Liberty' had been dedicated and who, having finally broken with the Court, had accepted the notion that he might gain influence by becoming a patron of literature." Thomson, questioned about the state of his worldly affairs, replied that they were "in a more poetical posture than formerly." He was granted a pension of a hundred pounds a year. Mallet and West were two other poets in great straits, and they, too, were granted similar pensions on the recommendation of Lyttelton.<sup>2</sup>

Thomson showed his gratitude in 'Agamemnon,' where there are frequent allusions to, and condemnations of, Walpole and his party. Pope was already Thomson's friend, and was present at the performance of the play, though it was but rarely that he was persuaded to go to a theatre.

Lyttelton was now taking an important role in Opposition politics. Thanks to his efforts, the genius of Thomson and Fielding, and the talent of Mallet and Glover were brought to play against Walpole's

1. W. Bayne: James Thomson, 1898, p. 93.

2. G. C. Macaulay. Thomson, 1908, p. 45.

ministry. It was, therefore, with some truth that Pope wrote of Lyttelton in his 'Epistle to Bolingbroke,' 1737:

"Sometimes a patriot, active in debate,  
Mix with the world, and battle for the State,  
Free as young Lyttelton her cause pursue,  
Still true to virtue, and as warm as true."<sup>1</sup>

In January, 1738, the Parliament re-opened with the King's address expressing the hope that the "Lords and Gentlemen would lay aside their heats and animosities." Walpole was still Prime Minister, in spite of the Queen's death,<sup>2</sup> for the King had always liked him on his own account. The Opposition were, therefore, more determined than ever to resist the Government; they made two demands—the reduction of the Standing Army, and the declaration of war with Spain, whose navy had continually interfered with British trade. They explained the apparent inconsistency on the ground that as war with Spain would be a sea war, no army would be required. The Government won the debate on the Standing Army question, in the course of which Lyttelton made a good speech in the Commons, though it had one or two plainly childish arguments.<sup>3</sup> Fox rose to answer him, saying: "The small experience I have had in debates of this nature makes me a very unequal match for the gentleman who spoke last!" The debate on the subject of war with Spain took place later.

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1. Imitations of Horace, Bk. I, Ep. I. To Lord Bolingbroke, lines 27-30.

2. The Queen died on 20th November, 1737.

3. See Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England, 1811, Vol. 10, pp. 405-417.

Meanwhile, on the 13th of April, the House of Commons passed a resolution, that it was a high breach of privilege to publish in any newspaper their debates. Consequently the proceedings of Parliament began to be published under feigned headings and disguised names or anagrams. The 'Gentleman's Magazine' published regularly in its columns "Debates in the Senate of Lilliput." The 'London Magazine' gave the parliamentary speakers Roman appellations. The prominent rôle which Lyttelton now played in Opposition politics, and his reputation as a speaker, and as the author of the 'Persian Letters,' drew upon him about this time the inevitable abuse and wanton attacks of the journals in the pay of the Government. The 'Daily Gazetteer' indulged in ceaseless attacks upon him, both in doggerel verse and prose.<sup>1</sup> Chesterfield wrote a clever reply in the 'Common Sense' in defence of his friend, who amongst other names had been called, Cæcilius, the sham prosecutor of Verres.

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1. In the 'Daily Gazetteer' of October 28th, 1737, there appeared an epistle "To the no less Politick than Witty G—E L—tl-n, Esq., with advice to other Patriot Wits" . . . . .

"Prithee Hark, G—ge and learn, for although we admit  
All the flowers of your Rhetorick, all your trophies of Wit,  
Should we own the Court-writers, as boldly you vapour,  
Are a dull set of rogues as e'er set pen to paper?

What then my young Patriot? What's proved,  
my Logician?

—That a rhymers and wit may be no politician—  
For you who in Journals are so quaint and so Witty,  
Are, you know, a dull dolt in debate or Committee;  
And when you would thunder a speech with éclat  
For your sense and your Wit must still peep in your Hate,  
Till like some dull block-head at Eton we find you,  
Who blundering on, wants a Prompter behind you."

Pope was now deeply associated with the Opposition. Already, once before, he had shown the trend of his political opinions in the "Epistle to Augustus," with its covert attack and ridicule on the King and Sir Robert Walpole. This year, in 1738, he made no pretence of his leanings towards the Opposition. While the political atmosphere was full of excitement, caused by the open breach between the King and his son, and Walpole's policy towards Spain, Pope published in May and July, two dialogues, originally called '1738,' and known now as the "Epilogue to the Satires." It was an impassioned attack, full of brilliance and power, on the corruption of the Ministry, and bitterly satiric of the King and the Court party. The powerful irony of Pope's verses stung Walpole to the quick, but he dared not attack the poet openly. He threatened Paul Whitehead, however, another Opposition poet, with arrest and imprisonment, and Warton says, "This was intended as a hint to Pope, and that he understood it as such; and did not publish a third dialogue, which he certainly designed to." The leaders of the Opposition received tributes in the 'Dialogues,' as was fitting, and Lyttelton was one of them. In the first Dialogue, Pope says of Lyttelton:

If any ask you, 'Who's the man, so near  
His prince, that writes in verse, and has  
his ear'?

Why answer Lyttelton; and I'll engage  
The worthy youth shall ne'er be in a rage.

In the second dialogue, he exclaims:

I only call those knaves who are so now.  
Is that too little? Come then, I'll comply—

Spirit of Arnall! aid me while I lie.  
 Cobham's a coward, Polwarth is a slave,  
 And Lyttelton, a dark designing knave,  
 St. John has ever been a mighty fool . . . .

In connexion with this poem, Lyttelton wrote an interesting letter to Pope, on July 13, 1738. Pope had evidently sent his friend a copy of the poem, and Lyttelton must have, with his usual frankness, expressed his opinion of it. Pope probably replied to this, praising Lyttelton's sincerity in the matter, and Lyttelton wrote back from Stowe: "You compliment me on my sincerity where it deserves no compliment. To tell truth to an indifferent author is a mark of sincerity, for he is sure to be angry and unable to mend the faults you find; but in works so near perfection, to point out some accidental blemishes is no more than telling a fine woman you dislike some little part of her dress, which altering a pin or two she can easily correct."<sup>1</sup>

On the same day as the first "Dialogue" was published, Johnson, then unknown and poor, had brought out his 'London,' a poem which was soon received very favourably by the public. It is interesting to see from the biography of Johnson by Sir John Hawkins, that Lyttelton was the means whereby Pope came to read 'London.' "Lyttelton, the instant it was published, carried it in rapture to Pope, who having read it, commended it highly, and was very importunate with Dodsley to know the author's name."<sup>2</sup> On enquiry, Pope was told by the younger Richardson that the author was an obscure man,

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1. Elwin and Courthope: Vol. 9, p. 174.

2. Sir J. Hawkins: Life of Samuel Johnson, 1787, p. 60.

and considerably in straits. Pope replied, "He will soon be *déterré*," and eager to help the author, wrote to Lord Gower on his behalf for a post, but without success. Johnson, who came to know this later, is said to have observed: "Who would not be proud to have such a man as Pope so solicitous in inquiring about him?"<sup>1</sup>

At the close of the session of Parliament in 1738, Lyttelton invited Pope to Hagley; but the latter could not accept the invitation. "I wish you all the joy of one another," he wrote, "I am truly sorry to want the joy I proposed, and had placed in my heart, of seeing this in person. . . . I have had but very bad health since you left me, but 'tis no matter, 'tis all in the way to immortality; however I advise you to live for the sake of this pretty world, and the prettiest things in it."

In October, Pope wrote a letter to Swift, "at the request of a very particular and deserving friend," "I mean Mr. Lyttelton, one of the worthiest of the rising generation. His nurse has a son whom I beg you to promote to the next vacancy in your choir. I loved my nurse and so does Lyttelton; he is loved through the whole chain of relations, dependants, and acquaintances. He is one who would apply to any person to please or serve mine."<sup>2</sup> Swift was able to accede to this request, and Lyttelton's man, one Lamb, got the place desired in the choir at St. Patrick's, Dublin. Lyttelton wrote to thank the Dean for his favour: "My acknowledgments to you for the favour you have done Mr. Lamb. . . . Give

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1. Elwin and Courthope: Vol. 5, pp. 326-27.

2. October 12th, 1738. Correspondence of Swift: Elrington Ball, F. 1910-14. Vol. 6, pp. 100-101.

me leave to take this occasion of assuring you how much I wish to be in the number of your friends. I think I can be so even at this distance, though we should never be a nearer acquaintance; for the reputation of some men is amiable, and one can love their characters, without knowing their persons. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

In May of the following year, Swift wrote to Pope asking for Lyttelton's help in the nomination of a friend of his, one Alexander Macaulay, to a seat in the Irish Parliament, to represent the University of Dublin.<sup>2</sup> The Prince of Wales was the Chancellor of the University, and as Lyttelton was his secretary, Swift hoped that he would induce the Prince to use his influence to secure the nomination of Macaulay. Lyttelton readily complied, and in the words of Pope, "was more prompt to catch than I to give fire, and flew to the Prince who was as pleased to please you."

Swift wrote a letter to Lyttelton, thanking him for his services in the matter.<sup>3</sup> It is dated 5th June, 1739, and runs as follows:—

"Sir, you treat me very hard by beginning your letter with owning an obligation to me, on account of Mr. Lamb, which deserves mine and my Chapter's thanks for recommending so useful a person to my choir. . . . In one article you are greatly mistaken; for however ignorant we may be in the affairs of England, your character is well-known among us in every particular as it is in the Prince your Master's court, and indeed all over this poor kingdom. . . . In a letter I wrote to Pope, I desired

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1. May 16th, 1739. Correspondence of Swift, Vol. 6, pp. 128-29.

2. *Ibid*, Vol. 6, pp. 127-28.

3. *Ibid*, Vol. 6, pp. 133-35.

him to recommend Mr. Macaulay to your favour and protection. . . . I perceive you have effectually interceded with the Prince. . . . I ought to accuse you highly for your ill-treatment of me by wishing yourself in the number of my friends. But you shall be pardoned if you please to be one of my protectors, and your protection cannot be long; you shall therefore make it up in thinking favourably of me. Years have made me lose my memory in everything but for friendship and gratitude, and you, Sir, whom I have never seen, will never be forgot by me till I am dead." Swift's memory was fast failing about this time and his letters were none too good, but this one is as good as the letters he used to write when he was in much better health.<sup>1</sup>

Swift's attempt to thrust Macaulay on the Senate, through the influence of the Prince, failed, as it deserved to, for no one had the right to supersede the free choice of the electors, who very properly resented interference, and rejected Macaulay. So Lyttelton wrote to Swift: "I am sorry His Royal Highness's recommendation has been of so little value to your friend." Swift had sent him a present of his 'Collected Works' through his book-seller in Dublin, and Lyttelton wrote to express his gratefulness for 'the pleasure of owing them to your own kindness.' "I will place them in my study, next to Mr. Pope's, which he, too, gave me himself, and can truly assure you, that excepting that present I never received one which I value so much."<sup>2</sup> The correspondence

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1. Correspondence of Swift: Elrington Ball, F.: Vol. 6, p. 133.

2. August 4th, 1739. *Ibid*, Vol. 6, pp. 137-38.



ended here, and shortly after, Swift was overtaken by the silence and madness that never left him till his death in 1745.

Meanwhile, the political horizon was anything but calm. The Opposition had been demanding insistently for some time past that there should be no conciliation with Spain, that she should either make amends or the Government should declare war. The demand for war with Spain had popular indignation behind it, and was a matter for Walpole's serious consideration. The stories of Spanish outrages on British vessels on the ocean highways, and the evidence of Jenkins with his famous ear before the Bar of the House of Commons, had driven the nation to a frenzied hatred of Spain. War was on everybody's lips. The Opposition knew that Walpole was always for peace in his foreign policy. It, therefore, took advantage of the popular feeling against Spain, to fan it sedulously on the one hand in their journals, and on the other, to oppose the Convention signed in January, 1739, with Spain, and to press unceasingly for a declaration of war against that country. The debate on the Convention came on early in March, 1739. There was an unprecedented feeling of excitement in the air, and it seemed to all that the critical moment had come; before eight in the morning a hundred members were in their seats. Pitt made a magnificent effort and delivered the best speech of the day. He surpassed Lyttelton, but the latter, too, spoke with remarkable ability.<sup>1</sup> Walpole, however, had his majority still, though it

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1. See Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England, 1811, Vol. 10, pp. 1238-1290. March 8th, 1739. See also pp. 1345-1347.

was fast dwindling; and the debate ended in a victory for the Government. It was none the less only a short-lived triumph. The tension between England and Spain increased as the months passed, and the tales of Spanish aggression drove the English to exasperation. The march of events inevitably led to the declaration of war on October 19th, 1739. Walpole was forced to it reluctantly enough. As the church bells rang, to the joy of the mad populace, Walpole made his famous pun—"They are ringing the bells now, before long they will be wringing their hands." The prophecy was only too true; in two or three years, the English were tired of the war, and the gains were few compared with the waste of effort and of organisation.

The Opposition had seceded from the House between March and October, as a mark of their disapproval of the result of the debate on the Convention with Spain. It was a foolish gesture, much regretted, for they came back in November to receive the derision of the public, as also of the Prime Minister, who said, "he should not be sorry to see them secede again," if they had come only to obstruct and hamper the work of Government. "The secession should be writ up as much as possible," wrote Chesterfield to Lyttelton, "for it is not, I find, enough understood by the generality."<sup>1</sup>

About this time, Lyttelton published anonymously "A Letter to a Member of Parliament from a friend in the country." It begins in this vein: "I am a private gentleman of some property in the County of—and voted for you at the Election of this

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1. Letter of March 24th, 1739, from Bath. Phillimore, p. 124.

Parliament. I voted for you neither as a Whig nor a Tory; but as a gentleman, whom I believed to be in the interest of my country." The 'friend in the country' then makes a thrust at the 'little places' and bribes given to influential supporters of the Government, and launches a fierce attack on the Government for its lethargy in dealing with the Spanish outrages on British vessels, and their escape with impunity. "Our enemies have certainly acted as if they thought we were *the meanest of nations* or that the *meanest of ministers* conducted our affairs. . . . Reputation is to people just what credit is to a merchant." The pamphlet is an able and well-planned attack on Walpole's attitude towards Spain and his policy in general. It ends with a fervent prayer that "an alteration of measures may be the aim, the effect and *the reward* of the Opposition." "May the public good be the object, the bond, and the security of power."

On the 29th of January, 1740, a bill was introduced by Sandys for "the better securing the freedom of Parliament by limiting the number of officers to sit in the House of Commons." Lyttelton made a very able speech on this "Placemen's Bill," as it was called, in reply to Selwyn on the Government benches.<sup>1</sup> "He knew but one thing more preposterous than such a general place-bill, as would exclude all persons in office from a seat in the House, and that was to leave the number of them without any limitations at all; the fear of starving should not cause us to die of surfeit; the number of placemen in the House should be so limited as to compel the

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1. For the discussion, see Cobbett's *Parliamentary History of England*, 1811, Vol. 11, pp. 335-399.

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1. For the discussion, see Cobbett's *Parliamentary History of England*, 1811, Vol. II, pp. 335-399.

Minister to regard the assembly as an awful tribunal, before which he was constantly to account for his conduct; he must respect their judgments, dread their censures, and feel their superintendency. A spectator in the gallery must not imagine himself at the levée of a minister, instead of a Parliament; better that Spain should invade the freedom of the American seas, than the Crown of England violate the independence of Parliament." The Government won but the majority was very low indeed, less than twenty.

Lyttelton took an active part in almost every important debate in the Commons. The 'Gentleman's Magazine' for May, 1740, wrote about him, as follows, in its "Debate in the Senate of Lilliput":

"The Urg: Lettyltno discovers a genius that will one day fit him for the management of the greatest public concern. He entered into the Senate at an age when others are scarcely fit for the University and has distinguished himself ever since by a zealous opposition on all occasions against the Ministers. He possesses all the qualifications of an accomplished scholar, and these he makes subservient to the duty of a Senator. He is highly in favour with the Prince Imperial and all the Virtuosi and Ingenious in the Liberal Arts. Particularly in poetry, we expect to see the Golden Age revive when he shall come into Court."<sup>1</sup> Lyttelton also contributed papers

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1. It is interesting to note that from November, 1740 to February, 1743, Johnson wrote the 'Debates and Proceedings in the Senate of Lilliput' for the 'Gentleman's Magazine.' The names of the speakers were in anagram form, and Johnson is supposed to have reported the speeches in Parliament made by important members of the Government and the Opposition. Johnson's reports are not authentic, as he did not visit the Houses of Parliament often, and it is said once only did he

to the Opposition Journals, and commenting on this, a ministerial writer 'Monsieur B—S,' who wrote in 1740, "An Historical View of the Principles of the Political Writers of Great Britain," says, "Numerous were the occasional Pamphlets that have been published besides all the regular journals of the 'Craftsman,' and the 'Common Sense' against the Ministry.<sup>1</sup> Mr. L—n, a gentleman about the P—ce of W—s, has been not a little active both as a writer of Pamphlets and Journals. Sometime ago, he published a pamphlet entitled 'Considerations on the Present State of Affairs' at home and abroad, which was filled with all the commonplace arguments in favour of a war with Spain, and which have been since fully answered by the conduct of the Ministry. This gentleman likewise is a great patron of all the Patriot poets, a set of men that do very little credit, either by their lives or their writings, to the Party."

Sir William Wyndham, the Tory leader of the Opposition, was fast failing in health. After the session was over, he went to France with the Earl of Marchmont to visit Bolingbroke at his retreat in France at Argeville. The first letter to Lyttelton from Bolingbroke was written about this time. After telling him about the arrival of Wyndham and Marchmont, the low health of the former, and his regret at the inability of Lyttelton to join them, Bolingbroke discusses the chances of a united

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do so. It is interesting to see Lyttelton's speech recorded by him in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' for April, 1741, the speech having been made on the motion for the removal of the Prime Minister, 'Sir R. Walleup.' 'Urg. Lettyltno' is George Lyttelton.

1. See "Common Sense," 9th April & 15th October, 1737.

"This letter," writes Mrs. Wyndham, "crossed one from Pope filled with the advice Lyttelton wished him to impart."<sup>1</sup> Pope was not prepared, however, to be a preceptor so close to the Prince as Lyttelton desired. He replied in an equivocal manner: "I love virtue, for I love you and such as you; such are enlisted under her banners; they fight for her . . . . Poets are but like heralds; they can but proclaim her, and the best you can make of me is that I am her poor trumpeter . . . . Pray assure your master of my duty and service. I wish him at the head of the only good party in the kingdom, that of honest men . . . ."<sup>2</sup>

The relations between the Prince and Pope were, however, excellent. A letter from Pope to Swift of May, 1739, tells us: "The Prince showed me a distinction beyond any merit or pretence on my part, and I have received from him a present of several marble heads of poets for my library, and some urns for my garden."<sup>3</sup> The busts were of Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton and Dryden, and it is interesting to note that when Pope died, he bequeathed them to Lyttelton.

Pope desired that his relations with the Prince and the Opposition should not seem too prominent, but his association with Lyttelton and the other leaders of the party was evidently well known. In 1740, Fox reproached Lyttelton in the House of Commons, "with the friendship of a lampooner

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1. M. Wyndham: *Eighteenth Century Chronicles*, Vol. 1, p. 70.

2. Elwin and Courthope: Vol. 9, pp. 178-181.

3. *Correspondence of Swift*: Elrington-Ball, F., Vol. 6, p. 131. May 17th, 1739.



who scattered his ink without fear or decency." Lyttelton vindicated with great spirit his intimacy with Pope. He replied that "he thought it an honour to be received into the familiarity of so great a poet."

Pope's villa at Twickenham was, about the beginning of 1740, the meeting-place of the Opposition leaders. He has himself described the gathering in his

" Egerian grot,

Where nobly pensive St. John sate and thought."

But those days were now past. Bolingbroke had gone to France, and the party was getting disunited. Soon, the Opposition received a great blow in the death of Sir William Wyndham, in July, 1740, a blow from which it took some time to recover. "He was," as Lyttelton wrote to Bolingbroke, "the centre of union of the best men of all the parties." With great tact and ability he had managed to keep them all together in the Opposition—the Tories, the Boy Patriots, and the Whig Malcontents. Dissension had gradually grown within the party since 1735; yet Wyndham had kept the party apparently united and active. Lyttelton, in his next letter to Bolingbroke, suggested that the Prince of Wales could, if he worked hard and persevered, keep the Tories united with the Whigs against Walpole. But the Prince was evidently neither clever nor enthusiastic enough to do so. The death of Wyndham thus proved a disaster. The

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1. Johnson: *Life of Lyttelton (Lives of the Poets)*: ed. Hill, G. B. Vol. 3, pp. 448-9.

2. See Elwin and Courthope: *The Works of Pope*, Vol. 4, p. 494.

elements of disruption in the party began to assert themselves. The Whigs were not united, and the Tories would not whole-heartedly co-operate with the Whigs. On February 13th, 1741, the Opposition launched a great attack against Walpole. Sandys brought forward a motion "to beseech his Majesty to remove Sir Robert Walpole from his presence and counsels for ever." The Opposition received an ignominious and perhaps well-deserved defeat. They failed at the critical moment. Some voted against the motion, and the Jacobite Tories did not vote at all. The Prince's adherents, the Hanoverian faction among the Tories, also failed in their duty. Lyttelton, Pitt and Grenville were faithful; they spoke and voted in favour of the motion.<sup>1</sup> Walpole made a very able defence, and divided his enemies into three classes, "The Boys, the riper Patriots, and the Tories." 'The Boys' were Lyttelton, Pitt and the "cousinhood," scornfully referred to, but indeed the backbone of the Opposition, a source of continual annoyance to Walpole with their ceaseless and vigorous attacks on him. The Patriots received a cutting jeer. "A Patriot, Sir! Why, Patriots spring up like mushrooms. I could raise fifty of them within twenty-four hours. I have raised many of them in one night. It is but refusing to gratify an unreasonable or an insolent demand, and up starts a Patriot." It was a humiliation brought down on itself by the Opposition owing to disunion. Bolingbroke wrote in fierce anger and disappointment to Marchmont, "The conduct of the Tories is silly, infamous, and void of any colour or excuse."

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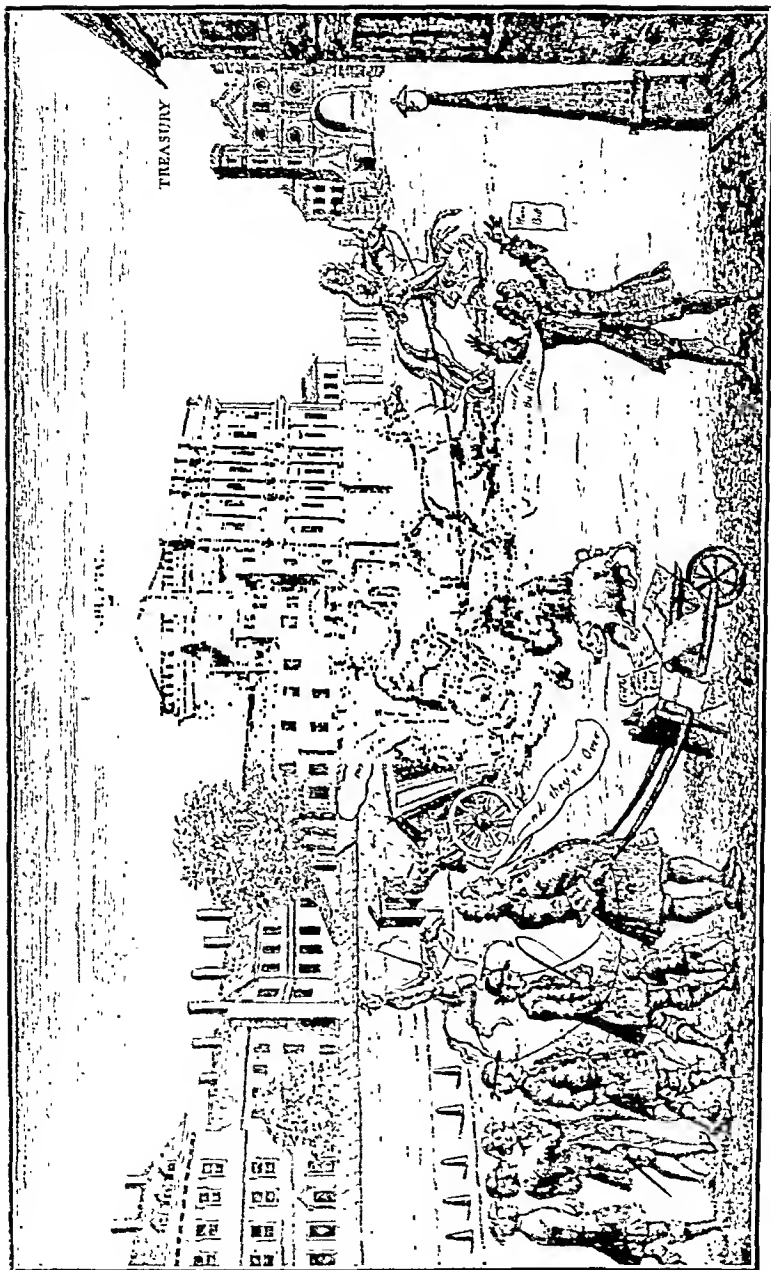
1. For Lyttelton's speech, see Cobbett's *Parliamentary History of England*, 1811, Vol. II, pp. 1370-1372.

The motion of Sandys created a great sensation in its day, and it became a fruitful subject for political journals and cartoonists. There are in the British Museum three caricatures, two alike and one slightly different and inferior in quality to the others, dealing with the "Motion." The best caricature is one 'printed for T. Cooper in March, 1741, at the Globe in Paternoster Row (price three pence),' called "The Motion." This famous caricature has been said to be "the earliest good political caricature that we possess." Writing about it to Seymour Conway from Florence, Horace Walpole says, "Your account of Sir Robert's victory was so extremely well told that I made Gray translate it into French, and have showed it to all that could taste it, and were inquisitive on the occasion. I have received a print by this post that diverts me extremely, the Motion: Tell me, dear, now, who made the design and who took the likeness; they are admirable; the lines are as good as one sees on such occasions."<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton is an important figure in this print. The 'Motion' is a spirited and well-drawn caricature and justly deserves its reputation. Whitehall, the Treasury and the adjoining buildings are represented in the background, as they then stood. Carteret in a coach is driven towards the Treasury by the Duke of Argyle as coachman, with Chesterfield as the postillion, and the vehicle is seen to be on the point of overturning due to their haste. Carteret cries, 'Get me out.' A waving sword, instead of a whip, is brandished by Argyle, and Dodington is sitting like a spaniel between his legs. Their characters are set

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1. H. Walpole: Letters. Toynbee. Vol. 1, p. 96.



# THE MOTION



description of Lyttelton's person than the above lines. Carlyle, in his "History of Frederick the Great," seizes on these clever lines to describe Lyttelton's physical features.<sup>1</sup>

The 'Motion,' in a short time, became famous all over London, and went into several editions; it drew forth many imitations, and counter-caricatures, but they were decidedly poor in style. The 'Patriots' retaliated with "The Reason" and "The Motive," but these had only a limited vogue.<sup>2</sup>

The General Election came on in the summer of 1741, and the parties for and against Walpole worked hard to capture the seats. Lord Deerhurst and George Lyttelton stood for Worcester in the Whig interest, and were opposed by two gentlemen on the Tory side, called Pytts and Lechmere. Curiously enough, all the four were opposed to Walpole and the Government. There were many efforts made to induce two of the four to retire, and make easy an otherwise absurd situation, but nothing resulted. A long poem, called "A political Eclogue," written by that wit, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, Lyttelton's schoolmate, and published by Nash in his history of the county<sup>3</sup> gives a very spirited and interesting

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1. Carlyle: History of Frederick the Great, 1869, Vol. 2, pp. 40-44.

2. Thomas Wright in his book 'England under the House of Hanover,' 1848, says of Lyttelton:

In one print of the portrait of this orator of the party (for after Fox he was looked upon as one of their better speakers in the House of Commons) is caricatured under the name of *Cassius*. In another, he is drawn at full length, proffering the support of his tongue, and declaring that "What oratory can do, shall be done! But then, good Sir, you know I am but one."—p. 286.

3. Nash: History of Warwickshire, 1781. Supplement, p. 39.



“ Think on the high employment that I bear,  
 I write in verse, and have my Prince's ear,  
 The glorious talent to declaim is mine,  
 In Council and Parliament I shine,  
 Why would'st thou clip the wings on which  
I soar?

Destroy my hopes of Ministerial power,  
 And stop me in my full pursuit of Glory?”

Lechmere gives the brief reply:

Besause, Sir, you're a Whig and I'm a Tory.

Lyttelton exclaims:

To what remote, to what unfriendly sky,  
 Deserted patriotism wilt thou fly?

The Tories scorn thee, and the Whigs deny.

There is another quip at Lyttelton in Lechmere's  
 reply:

Go to the farmer, fine orations speak,  
 To wives talk Latin, to their husbands Greck,  
 I in plain English will the country rand,  
 And shake each good freeholder by the hand,  
 And drink the Church as long as I can stand.

Among the many who worked hard for Lyttelton,  
 was Shenstone, who had by this time become a good  
 friend of the family. In the previous year, in April,  
 1740, his warm admiration had led him to dedicate  
 the “ Judgment of Hercules ” to Lyttelton. The  
 verses are fulsome praise, indeed, and run as  
 follows:

“ While blooming spring descends from genial  
skies,  
 By whose mild influence instant wonders rise;  
 From whose soft breath Elysian beauties flow,  
 The sweets of Hagley or the pride of Stowe;  
 Will Lyttelton the rural landskip range,



Leave noisy fame, and not regret the change?  
Pleas'd will he treat the garden's early scenes,  
And learn a moral from the rising greens?

\* \* \* \*

Happiest of these is he whose matchless mind,  
By learning strengthen'd and by taste refin'd,  
In Virtue's cause essayed its earliest pow'rs;  
Chose Virtue's paths and strewed her paths  
with flow'rs.

The first alarmed, if Freedom waves her  
wings:

The fittest to adorn each art she brings:  
Lov'd by that prince whom ev'ry virtue fires:  
Praised by that bard whom ev'ry music  
inspires:<sup>1</sup>

Blest in the tuneful art, the social flame,  
In all that wins, in all that merits fame!"<sup>2</sup>

In spite of hard work, however, and Pope's blessing given on the eve of the polling,<sup>3</sup> Lyttelton failed in the Election. The cause of the defeat was the voters' lack of confidence in the family, caused by his father's last-minute withdrawal at a previous Election, and the waste of effort and disappointment it had brought about. Lyttelton, however, did not lose his seat in the House. He hurried to his original borough, Okehampton, and was again returned to Parliament.

In October, 1741, Lyttelton cultivated the acquaintance of Garrick, whose first appearance in London, on the nineteenth of that month, had taken

1. The Prince of Wales and Pope.

2. A. Chalmers: English Poets, 1810. Vol. 13, p. 308.

3. Elwin and Courthope: The Works of Pope, Vol. 8, p. 359. Letter to Bathurst, April 28th, 1741.

the city by storm. The wonderful impression he created on the public brought crowds to Goodman's Fields. As Arthur Murphy wrote, "From the polite ends of Westminster the most elegant company flocked to Goodman's Fields, insomuch that from Temple Bar the whole way was covered with a string of coaches."<sup>1</sup> The 'Great Mr. Pope' was drawn from his retreat at Twickenham, and Pitt and Lyttelton were among the 'elegant company,' who witnessed the actor's performance.<sup>2</sup> Lyttelton, full of enthusiasm, took Garrick by the hand and said, 'he never saw such playing before.'<sup>3</sup> The friendship thus begun grew into intimacy, as we shall see later, and lasted a long time.

In the same month, Pope and Lyttelton intervened successfully in a quarrel between Warburton and Dr. Middleton. Warburton had met Pope for the first time in May 1740, a year after he had written his "Commentary on Mr. Pope's 'Essay on Man.'"<sup>4</sup> He must have come to know Lyttelton about the same time, for there is a letter written a month later by Lyttelton to Warburton, thanking him for his present of the book.<sup>5</sup> The quarrel with Middleton arose in the following manner. In the "Divine Legation," 1737-38, Warburton had expressed views opposed to those of Dr. Middleton in the "Letter from Rome," on the subject of "Papal Superstitions." The two divines were great friends and had desired to remain so, in spite of their different

1. Life of David Garrick, 1801, Vol. 1, p. 25.

2. *Ibid*, Vol. 1, p. 25.

3. Garrick and his Circle. Mrs. Clement Parsons. p. 57.

4. Life of Bishop Warburton—J. S. Watson, 1861, p. 183.

5. 10th June, 1740. "A Selection from the Papers of W. Warburton," 1841. F. Kilvert, p. 196.

opinions on the subject. After some time, however, Dr. Middleton was imprudent enough to complain to a mutual friend about Warburton's opinions, and the latter, getting scent of this, wrote Middleton an angry letter. Warburton had never a good temper in his controversies. Dr. Johnson says of him, "His impatience of opposition disposed him to treat his adversaries with such contemptuous superiority as made his readers commonly his enemies. He used no allurements of gentle language, but wished to compel rather than persuade."<sup>1</sup> It was thus very likely that a hot quarrel would take place any moment between the two divines. Pope and Lyttelton, however, succeeded in placating Warburton, and by their tact and sympathy, persuaded him to drop the matter. Phillimore quotes in full two very long letters from Warburton, giving *in extenso* his reasons for the views he held, and his grievances against Middleton. "You, Sir, and Mr. Pope have determined me to be silent," Warburton writes to Lyttelton, ". . . you seem to think that we have divided the truth between us and only squabble like school-boys for the largest share." After hearing of the amicable settlement of the threatened dispute, Lyttelton wrote to Pope: "I have lately heard from Mr. Warburton, who desires me to acquaint you that he has dropt his dispute with Dr. Middleton, as you advised him to, though he has convinced me he could well have maintained it if he had not loved peace and friendship better than victory."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Life of Pope: Johnson. Lives of the English Poets, ed. G. B. Hill, Vol. 3, p. 166.

2. See Phillimore: Memoirs of Lyttelton, pp. 163-179. Letter of November 7th, 1741.

About this time (1741), Lyttelton began work on his "History of Henry the Second," a book that took him more than twenty-five years to finish. He submitted a portion of the manuscript to Warburton, as we learn from the following letter to Pope:

" . . . . My humble service to Mr. Warburton. I am very glad he finds anything to be pleased with in the manuscript I lent him, and shall beg his assistance in the prosecution of the work, to make it more worthy of his approbation. If when he is at Cambridge he should find anything in the libraries there relating to Henry II or Becket, that may be of use to me, I will take the liberty to desire him to communicate it." In the same letter he writes, "I am extremely grieved that I must give up all hopes of seeing you at Hagley this year, for when you are there with me, *gratior it dies et soles melius nitent!* (More graciously passes the day, more brightly shines the sun). But my poor father's ill-health incapacitates him from receiving company, and me from enjoying it."<sup>1</sup>

On November 3rd, 1741, Pope wrote from Bath, "I have lately received a letter in which are these words—'Suffer not Mr. Lyttelton to forget me'; it made me reflect I am as unwilling to be forgotten by you, though I do not deserve so well to be remembered on any account, but that of an early, a well-grounded and (let me add) a well-judged esteem of you. I do not ask anything, but to know that you are well."<sup>2</sup> This letter, with Lyttelton's reply written three days later, is the last in the correspondence between Pope and Lyttelton.

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1. 13th June, 1741. Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 9, p. 182.  
2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 9, pp. 183-84.

The end of 1741 saw important developments in the political situation. The General Election in the summer had resulted in a good majority for the Opposition, and Walpole found his followers considerably reduced in number. The Opposition gained heart, and planned busily all through the recess, the form of campaign to be launched against Walpole. Chesterfield was on the continent, conferring with Bolingbroke, and both wrote long letters to Lyttelton on the subject of the future and the manœuvres to be adopted. Bolingbroke warned the Opposition that they had not only to remain united, but have in readiness a constructive policy, in the event of Walpole's fall. The Opposition was lacking in both respects, but its enhanced numbers gave it gradual success, culminating finally in Walpole's resignation in February, 1742. Three defeats for the Government following one after another, since the opening of Parliament in December, 1741, rendered Walpole powerless, and left him vanquished; after twenty years of administration, he resigned the reins into the hands of his enemies. The Opposition exulted in their triumph, but it was not long-lived; for they did not know what to do or say, once they had achieved their purpose. They woefully lacked the constructive programme which Bolingbroke had insisted on for years, and they failed at the hour of victory. Pulteney, their brilliant orator and clever leader, lost courage at the crowning moment of his life, and abjectly accepted a peerage. His party, helpless and torn by dissensions, looked on silently while the King offered the administration to Lord Wilmington, an obscure member of the Upper House entirely under the thumb of Walpole, now created Earl of Orford.

A month later, there was a fierce debate on the question of a committee to enquire into the conduct of Walpole during the twenty years of his administration. Pitt and Lyttelton spoke vehemently; the resolution was passed, but such was the influence of Walpole yet, that it was never carried into effect.<sup>1</sup>

Before we close the chapter, we must deal with Lyttelton's marriage which took place this year. Busy with the strife and heat of politics and journalism, Lyttelton had perhaps little time to devote to the softer delights of love. When very young, he had been smitten with Pitt's sister, Harriot, but the infatuation had passed, and left him quite hale and hearty. Twelve years later, he fell in love with Lucy Fortescue, the only daughter of Hugh Fortescue of Filleigh, Devonshire. It is probable that they met at the grand ball which Mrs. Delany described in a letter to Mrs. A. Grenville on 22nd January, 1740. The Prince of Wales was present at the Ball, "in old clothes and not well; he was obliged to go early." It is very likely Lyttelton too, as his private secretary, attended the ball. Mrs. Delany is rapturous over the charms of Miss Fortescue. "She looked like Cleopatra in her bloom; I thought her the *handsomest woman* at the ball; she was in pink and silver, and very well drest."<sup>2</sup> Writing in *The Beauties* (a poem addressed to Eckardt in July, 1746), Horace

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1. See Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England, 1811, Vol. 12, pp. 512, 583.

2. Mrs. Delany later, then Mrs. Pendarves—"Autobiography and Correspondence of Mrs. Delany"—ed. by Lady Llanover, 1861-62, Vol. 2, p. 72.

Walpole describes Lucy Fortescue as  
 . . . . . the light dispensing fair,  
 Whose beauty gilds the morning air  
 And bright as her attendant sun  
 The new aurora, Lyttelton!<sup>1</sup>

There are a number of poems, in Lyttelton's works, addressed to the handsome dark-eyed Devonshire lady and written probably during the days of his courtship. A few of them are vapid; the others are pretty and graceful. On presenting the lady he loved with a copy of Hammond's 'Elegies,' he wrote:

" All that of love can be expressed  
 In these soft numbers see;  
 But Lucy, would you know the rest,  
 It must be read in me! "

In another poem, there is a passionate prayer to Venus "in her temple at Stowe."

" But if my soul is filled with her alone;  
 No other wish, nor other object knows,  
 Oh! make her, Goddess, make her all my own,  
 And give my trembling heart repose! "

And,

" On Thames's bank a gentle youth.  
 For Lucy sigh'd, with matchless truth,  
 E'en when he sighed in rhyme! "

The 'gentle youth' sighed not in vain; the courtship proved successful. In February, 1742, the two lovers were engaged, and in June, the marriage was duly celebrated in London, at St. George's, Hanover

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1. Austin Dobson: Horace Walpole: A Memoir, 1927, p. 116.

Square. It was a very happy match, for they loved each other passionately, and had many interests and tastes in common. And Lucy Lyttelton's 'meekened sense, and amiable grace and lively sweetness'<sup>1</sup> gave her husband for the next few years his greatest happiness in life.

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1. Thomson. 'The Seasons,' 1744. 'Spring,' in 'The Description of Hagley.' See p. 132, *post*.



## CHAPTER VI

### LITERARY FRIENDSHIPS

#### THE ' MONODY ' AND OTHER POEMS

1743-1750

Lyttelton was now, though not yet thirty-five, a prominent figure in Society. He was one of the acknowledged leaders of the Opposition, an active patron of letters and himself a writer of no mean merit. On the 26th of January, 1743, the Royal Society elected him a Fellow, along with William Pitt, two months after Voltaire's election.<sup>1</sup> It was, of course, a distinction merited only by his importance in the political world.

Meanwhile, his friendship with men of letters, like Thomson, and Fielding grew apace, and ripened into close intimacy. By 1743, Thomson had become a great friend of George Lyttelton, and that year Thomson went to Hagley for the first time. In a letter of the 14th July, 1743, replying to Lyttelton's invitation, Thomson wrote: "Hagley is the place in England I most desire to see; I imagine it to be greatly delightful in itself and I know it to be so to the highest degree by the company it is animated with. . . . . Nothing shall hinder me from passing three weeks or a month with you before you leave it. As this will fall in Autumn, I shall like it better, for I think that season of the year most pleasing and most poetical. The spirits are not then dis-

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1. The Record of the Royal Society, 1912.

sipated with the gaiety of Spring, and the glaring light of summer, but composed into a serious and tempered joy. The year is perfect. In the meantime I will go on with correcting and printing the 'Seasons' and hope to carry down more than one of them with me. . . . ."

Thomson had in mind a new edition of the 'Seasons,' to be published the following year, and the preparation entailed not only a complete revision, but numerous additions which gave the poem its final shape. Lyttelton displayed great interest in the corrections and amendments made in the poem by Thomson during his stay at Hagley. Moreover, he "contributed to it many suggestions, his classical taste being inclined to a far simpler style." G. C. Macaulay writes as follows in his biography of Thomson: "There exists an interleaved copy of the 'Seasons' which was evidently used in his work of revision, full of manuscript corrections and additions, most of which are reproduced in the issue of 1744. These are written chiefly in Thomson's own handwriting, but partly also in that of Lyttelton. Lyttelton's own hand, which hardly appears in the early part of the book, is found most frequently and regularly in the 'Autumn' which, we must assume, was worked through in this volume by the two friends together, probably during Thomson's visit to Hagley in 1743. The corrections and suggestions are given

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1. R. Phillimore: *Memoirs of Lyttelton*, 1845, pp. 286-87.

2. G. C. Macaulay. *Thomson*, 1908, p. 58. Churton Collins says of the corrections, that "they are, in many cases, of extraordinary merit, showing a fineness of ear and delicacy of touch quite above the reach of Thomson himself."—*Ephemeræ Critica*, J. C. Collins, 1901, p. 328.

here in such a manner that they were the immediate result of critical discussion."<sup>1</sup>

For a long period of time, the general belief held was that the corrections were made by Pope. Mitford was the strongest supporter of this theory. Churton Collins opposed this view,<sup>2</sup> and whatever doubts there were, as to Lyttelton being the person who made many of the corrections and suggestions, were dispelled by the scholarly examination of the matter by G. C. Macaulay. The main evidence is based on an interleaved copy of the 1738 edition of the "Seasons" existing in the British Museum, containing corrections made in preparation for the edition of 1744, in the handwriting of Thomson himself, and of another person, with whom apparently the author was working. Mitford had held that the second hand was Pope's, but careful examination proved that it was not Pope's. Three other likely friends of the poet remain—Young, Mallet, and Lyttelton. On comparison with Lyttelton's handwriting as could be seen in

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1. G. C. Macaulay: 'Thomson,' 1908, pp. 58-59.

2. Churton Collins in his "Ephemera Critica," 1901, p. 328, while ably supporting the view that whoever made the corrections, it was *not* Pope, says that 'it could not, as his other stupid revisions of Thomson's verses show, have been Lyttelton.' Evidently, in making this remark, Collins did not consider the similarities in the corrections and certain portions of Lyttelton's poem, the 'Monody.' The handwriting, moreover, of these corrections is exactly like, or at least more like Lyttelton's than like any one else's. The case for Lyttelton is also made out by Thomson's letter of 1743, quoted before, and his stay at Hagley. Dr. O. Zippel (Thomson's "Seasons," Critical Edition, Berlin, 1908, pp. vi-ix and xxii-xxxii) has contributed another conclusive proof of Lyttelton's authorship of the corrections by pointing out many instances in which the suggestions of the collaborator, that had not been accepted by Thomson for his 1744 Edition, were repeated by Lyttelton in the 1750 edition issued by him after Thomson's death.

the Newcastle Papers, it became obvious that only Lyttelton could have made the corrections and suggestions that appear in the smaller and more graceful hand, beside the big and rough letters of Thomson's. Mr. Macaulay writes in his article in the 'Athenæum' of October 1, 1904,<sup>1</sup> "Moreover, if we compare the style of the passages contributed to the 'Seasons' by the hitherto unknown contributor with that of Lyttelton's poem, we shall find that our conclusion is still further confirmed. The well-known simile of the myrtle (in the episode of Lavinia and Palemon), for example, has certainly some resemblance to a passage in Lyttelton's graceful "Monody." Compare:

"As in the hollow breast of Apennine,  
Beneath the shelter of encircling hills,  
A myrtle rises, far from human eye,  
And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild;  
So flourish'd blooming and unseen by all,  
The sweet Lavinia."

(Autumn, 209 ff.)

with:

"So where the silent streams of Liris glide,  
In the soft bosom of Campania's vale,

\* \* \* \*

The verdant orange lifts its beauteous head,  
From every branch the balmy flow'rets rise,  
On every bough the golden fruits are seen;  
With odours sweet it fills the smiling skies,  
The wood-nymphs tend, and the Idalian queen.  
But in the midst of all its blooming pride,

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1. Later substantially incorporated in the appendix to his biography of Thomson.

A sudden blast from Apenninus blows,  
Cold with perpetual snows;  
The tender, blighted plant shrinks up its  
leaves and dies."

(Monody, St. 13.)

Many of the corrections seen in Lyttelton's hand are decidedly an improvement on Thomson. In speaking of the story of Lavinia and Palemon, Mr. Macaulay writes: "It is a graceful little idyll, more simply presented than is usual with Thomson, and certainly owing something of its merit to the classical taste of his friend."<sup>1</sup>

The new edition of the 'Seasons' published in 1744, showed very considerable additions to the poem, which contained several interesting personal and local references. 'Spring' had an address to Lyttelton and a charming description of Hagley Park.

"These are the sacred feelings of thy heart,  
Thy heart informed by reason's purer ray,  
O Lyttelton, the friend! thy passions thus  
And meditations vary, as at large,  
Courting the Muse, thro' Hagley Park thou  
strayest  
Thy British Tempe! There along the dale,  
With woods o'erhung, and shagg'd with  
mossy rocks,  
Whence on each hand the gushing waters play,  
And down the rough cascade white-dashing  
fall,  
Or gleam in lengthened vista thro' the trees,  
You silent steal; or sit beneath the shade  
Of solemn oaks, that tuft swelling mounts

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1. Thomson: G. C. Macaulay, p. 124.

## A MINOR AUGUSTAN

Thrown graceful round by Nature's  
careless hand,  
And pensive listen to the various voice  
Of rural peace: the herds, the flocks, the birds,  
The hollow-whispering breeze, the plaint of rills,  
That, purling down amidst the twisted roots  
Which creep around, their dewy murmurs shake  
On the sooth'd ear. From these abstracted oft  
You wander thro' the philosophic world;  
Where in bright train continual wonders rise,  
Or to the curious or the pious eye.  
And oft, conducted by historic truth,  
You tread the long extent of backward time;

✱                      ✱                      ✱                      ✱

Or turning thence thy view these graver  
thoughts  
The Muses charm; while with sure taste refin'd  
You draw th' inspiring breath of ancient song,  
Till nobly rises, emulous thy own.  
Perhaps thy lov'd Lucinda shares thy walk,  
With soul to thine attun'd. Then Nature all  
Wears to the lover's eye a look of love;  
And all the tumult of a guilty world  
Tost by ungenerous passions, sinks away.  
The tender heart is animated peace:  
And as it pours its copious treasures forth,  
In varied converse, softening every theme,  
You, frequent-pausing, turn and from her eyes,  
Where meekened sense, and amiable grace,  
And lively sweetness dwell, enraptur'd drink,  
That nameless spirit of ethereal joy,  
Unutterable happiness which love  
Alone bestows, and on a favoured few.

Meantime you gain the height, from whose  
fair brow,  
The bursting prospect spreads immense around;  
And snatch'd over hill and dale, and wood  
and lawn,  
And verdant field, and darkening heath  
between,  
And villages embosomed soft in trees,  
And spiry towns by surging columns mark'd  
Of household smoke, your eye excursive roams,  
Wide stretching from the Hall, in whose  
kind haunt  
The hospitable genius lingers still,  
To where the broken landskip, by degrees,  
Ascending, roughens into rigid hills;  
O'er which the Cambrian mountains, like  
far clouds  
That skirt the blue horizon, dusky rise."

Lucinda was Lucy Lyttelton, the wife of his host and patron, a lady who was "the ornament and joy of her husband's life, and exerted her great influence over him for the noblest end."

Another poet, equally charmed by her gracious ways and hospitality, was Shenstone, the neighbour of the Lytteltons. Often a guest at Hagley, he could not fail to notice the ever-present kindness and grace of Lucy Lyttelton. In a letter written to his friend Graves, in 1743, he tells us: "I was on Monday, at Hagley, to wait on Mr. Lyttelton. . . . As to Mrs. Lyttelton, if her affability is not artificial, I mean, if it does not owe its origin to art, I cannot conceive a person more amiable; but sense and elegance cannot be feigned; to *exhibit* them is to *have them*."

1. Complete Works, 1791, Vol. 3, p. 79.

In the spring of the next year, Pope lay severely ill at Twickenham with asthma and dropsy. Fast failing in health, he was anxiously watched by his numerous friends. Bolingbroke, grave and sad, visited his bedside; so did Warburton and Lyttelton. Remedies were tried; but they never gave the relief needed. On May 5th, Lyttelton wrote to his father at Hagley: "Poor Pope is, I am afraid, going to resign all that can die of him to death; his case is a dropsy, and he wants strength of nature to bear the necessary evacuation for the cure of that distemper. I feel his loss very sensibly; for besides the public marks he has given me of his esteem, he has lately expressed the most tender friendship for me, both to myself and others, which at such a time affects one more than any compliment while he was in health."

Spence relates the following touching incident that took place during the visit of Lyttelton when Pope was lying stricken with the illness that proved fatal. "The 15th of May, 1744, on Mr. Lyttelton's coming to see him, Pope said, 'Here am I, dying of a hundred good symptoms.' This was just after Doctor T. had been telling him that he was glad to find that he breathed so much easier; that his pulse was very good; and several other encouraging things . . . . . Fifteen days later he died."<sup>2</sup>

Pope bequeathed to Lyttelton four of his marble busts of the English poets. T. Heely, describing the library at Hagley Hall, says: "The marble busts of Milton, Shakespeare, Spenser and Dryden, executed by Scheemaker, and bequeathed by Pope to

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1. Complete Works: 1776, Vol. 3, p. 319.

2. Spence's Anecdotes: p. 319. 1820 Edn.



George, Lord Lyttelton, adorn this apartment.”<sup>1</sup> To these a bust of Pope himself was added later by Lyttelton, who raised an urn also to his memory.

“ Crossing the deep dell,” writes Rev. Thomas Maurice, in his preface to his poem on Hagley, “ you arrive at the favourite spot of the late Mr. Pope in the midst of a swelling irregular lawn, entirely surrounded with woods; there his Lordship has erected an urn to the memory of this bard. . . .” The inscription is said to run, ‘ The sweetest and most elegant of the English poets, the severest chastiser of vice, and the most persuasive teacher of wisdom.’<sup>2</sup>

There was also erected at Hagley a “ Doric Portico, upheld by square pillars, situated on the top of a very high and beautiful lawn.” This portico is called Pope’s building and bears the following motto—“ *Quieti et Musis* ”—‘ To Retirement and the Muses.’

Between Lyttelton and Pope, a real and sincere friendship existed, as is obvious from the correspondence they exchanged, the appreciation of ‘ young Lyttelton’s’ virtue by Pope, and the great admiration and love that Lyttelton felt for the poet. He often invited Pope to Hagley,<sup>3</sup> and it is certain that

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1. J. Heeley: “ A companion to the Leasowes, Hagley, Etc.,” 1789. Also see *Pope’s last will, published in the Gentleman’s Magazine*, June, 1744.

“ . . . . . Item, I desire Mr. Lyttelton to accept of the busts of Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton and Dryden, which his Royal Master, the Prince, was pleased to give me.” See p. III, *ante*.

2. T. Maurice: A Description of Hagley, 1776.

3. See Lyttelton’s letter of September 11, 1736 (?) to his father from Stowe:

“ When I came to Lord Bathurst’s, I found that Pope

Pope went to Hagley at least once and stayed there for a considerable time. Hugh Miller wrote in 1847: "Among the English *literati* of the last century, there is no other writer of equal general ability, so decidedly, I had almost said servilely, of the school of Pope, as Lyttelton. The little crooked man, during the last thirteen years of his life, was a frequent visitor at Hagley; and it is still a tradition in the neighbourhood that in the hollow in which his urn has been erected, he particularly delighted. Here he forgot Cibber, *Sporus* and *Lord Fanny*;—flung up with much glee his poor shapeless legs, thickened by three pairs of stockings apiece, and far from thick after all; and called the place 'his own ground.' "

There is no reason to suppose that these happy relations between the poet and Lyttelton were at any time marred by any breach of friendship. It must, however, be confessed that an incident related by Horace Walpole seems to throw some doubt on the matter. The story is about Pope, Lyttelton and Bolingbroke, and the famous secret edition of the "Idea of a Patriot King" prepared by Pope, probably with the best of motives, at the suggestion of Allen, but so grossly misunderstood by Bolingbroke. In a letter to Horace Mann, written in May, 1749, Walpole says:

"The graver part of the world, who have not been quite so much given up to rockets and masking, are amused with a book of Lord Bolingbroke, just

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had excused himself from his visit there, as well as to Hagley, so was obliged to keep the horses to carry me to Stowe." Complete Works, 1776, Vol. 3, p. 309.

1. Hugh Miller: First Impressions of England and its People, 1847, p. 107.

published, but written long ago. It is composed of three letters, the first to Lord Cornbury on the 'Spirit of Patriotism,' and two others to Mr. Lyttelton (but with neither of their names), on 'The Idea of Patriot King,' and the 'State of Parties on the last King's accession.' Mr. Lyttelton had sent him word that he begged nothing might be inscribed to him, that was to reflect on Lord Orford, for that he was now leagued with all Lord Orford's friends. . . . But there is a preface to this famous book, which makes much more noise than the work itself. It seems, Lord Bolingbroke had originally trusted Pope with the copy, to have half a dozen printed for particular friends. Pope, who loved money infinitely beyond any friend, got fifteen hundred copies printed privately, intending to outlive Bolingbroke, and make great advantage of them: and he not only did this, but altered the copy at his pleasure and made different alterations in different copies. Where Bolingbroke had strongly flattered their common friend Lyttelton, Pope suppressed the panegyric: where, in compliment to Pope, he had softened the satire on Pope's great friend, Lord Orford, Pope reinstated the abuse. The first part of this transaction is recorded in the preface; the two latter facts are reported by Lord Chesterfield and Lyttelton, the latter of whom went to Bolingbroke to ask how he had forfeited his good opinion."<sup>1</sup>

It is inexplicable why Pope should have suppressed the praise Bolingbroke had given Lyttelton. There is no indication elsewhere that Pope's friend-

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1. The Letters of Horace Walpole: ed. Toynbee: Vol. 2, pp. 378-80.

ship for Lyttelton was anything but sincere: it is not improbable that he deleted the passage under consideration, for reasons consistent with the task of editorship which he had taken on himself. As for the motive of greed, which Horace Walpole attributes to Pope, as lying behind the secret issue of the essay, it has now been accepted by most people, that whatever the inducement to keep the edition ready was, it certainly was not the expectation of profit.

The Rev. Percival Stockdale has a very interesting anecdote in his *Memoirs*, relating to Lyttelton, Pope and Johnson. "Lord Lyttelton told me, that on a visit to Pope, while he was translating the *Iliad*, he took the liberty to express to that great poet his surprise, that he had not determined to translate Homer's poem into blank verse; as it was an epic poem, and as he had before him the illustrious example of Milton, in the '*Paradise Lost*.' Mr. Pope's answer to Lord Lyttelton was, that 'he could translate it more easily into Rhyme.' I communicated this anecdote to Dr. Johnson; his remark on it to me was very erroneous in criticism,—'Sir, when Pope said that he knew that he lied.'"<sup>1</sup> There is a mistake somewhere in the story, as the translation of the *Iliad* was finished in 1720, when Lyttelton was a boy of eleven at Eton, and could not have then known Pope. Either Lyttelton's remark to Pope was made much later, or perhaps, during the translation of the *Odyssey*, 1726, and not of the *Iliad*.

It is now necessary to return to politics, and Lyttelton's part therein. The Ministry formed after

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1. Johnson: *Miscellanies*, ed. Hill, Vol. 2, p. 332.

Walpole's fall in 1742, included most of the former members such as Chancellor Hardwicke and the Pelhams. Of the Opposition, Carteret was made a Secretary of State, and Cobham a Colonel of the Grenadier Guards. The 'Young Patriots' did not secure any office; neither did Chesterfield and the Tories. Wilmington died after eighteen months of office, and was succeeded by Henry Pelham. The Opposition, however, still continued, but was levelled more against Carteret, for his strongly pro-Hanoverian policy. The 'Cousinhood' assailed him actively on this point, and it was this which slowly brought a rift between the Prince of Wales and Lyttelton. The prince, much as he was opposed to his father on other points, was at one with him and Carteret on the question of Hanover. He strongly resented the attitude of Pitt and Lyttelton and the latter's advice that he should not trouble himself with Hanover, when he should succeed to the throne. Pitt and Lyttelton had not been given office on this score, as the King disliked them intensely on account of their attitude towards Hanover. In January, 1744, there took place an important debate on the question of taking the Hanoverian troops into British pay. Pitt and Lyttelton spoke with great spirit and attacked Carteret's policy as "erecting a triumphal arch from Hanover over the military honour and independence of Great Britain." The motion was won by the Government but they had felt sore pressed and uncomfortable. In a short time, Pelham found it impossible to go on unless he dropped Carteret and came to terms with his young and clever opponents. In May, 1744, Carteret was made to resign on the pressure of Pelham, and the 'Cobham

Squadron ' was taken into the Administration. On the 25th December of the same year, Lyttelton was made a Lord of the Treasury, and Grenville a Lord of the Admiralty. Pitt's ambition was to become Secretary of State, but the King would not tolerate for a moment his presence in the Cabinet. Pelham, however, promised him the post as soon as the King should conquer his prejudice. Thus was founded the famous Broad-Bottom Administration, the coalition of all parties. It included Bolingbroke's friends and Chesterfield besides the ' Young Patriots.' The acceptance of a post in an Anti-Hanoverian cabinet by Lyttelton completed the breach between him and his master the Prince of Wales. He was instantly dismissed from the Prince's service. Pitt, too, within a short time, resigned his office in the Prince's household.

George II had as strong a dislike to Lyttelton as to Pitt. J. Chambers, in his ' Biographical Illustrations of Worcestershire,' relates a very amusing story of his reception by the King. The King, it seems, had neglected Lyttelton to such an extent, that the latter resolved to resign unless His Majesty treated him more courteously. The Cabinet did not want to lose a " member of such distinguished abilities, and humbly entreated His Majesty to subdue his anger against Lyttelton, so far as to speak to him when he should next appear at the levée." George II reluctantly agreed. " The studying how to make these few words as ungraciously inapplicable as possible, cost the King some trouble, till he recollected that Lyttelton, from possessing a most refined mind, held all the rude sports of the field in utter abhorrence—this recollection ended his difficulty, and on Lyttel-

ton's next appearance, His Majesty approached him with this abrupt address: 'You are very fond of hunting, Sir, I know'; then turned away, and hurried on to another person."<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton's office gave him considerable influence, and he now exerted himself to do his best for Thomson. He succeeded in the task of getting a good post for his friend, and early in 1745, Thomson was appointed Surveyor-General of the Leeward Islands; he performed the duties of this office by deputy and he received about £300 a year from this source, after paying the deputy for his work.<sup>2</sup>

Soon after, Thomson's play, "Tancred and Sigismunda," was staged at one of the London theatres. Like the rest of his plays, it was political and violently Whig in tone. Pitt and Lyttelton were so actively interested in the success of the drama,

1. J. Chambers: *Biographical Illustrations of Worcestershire*, 1820, p. 404.

2. According to Dr. G. B. Hill (*Lives of the Poets—Johnson*; Vol. 3, p. 460), there is a good deal of doubt about the appointment of Thomson as Surveyor-General of the Leeward Islands. Murdoch and Johnson give the date of the appointment as 1746; later biographers, Morel, Secombe, and J. L. Robertson, accept 1744 as the true date. The warrant in the Public Record Office clearly establishes the fact that Paterson, the so-called deputy for Thomson, was appointed in May, 1746. There is no mention of Thomson in the warrant. The post was not a sinecure and could not have been discharged through a deputy, for the previous incumbents, Perrie and Dunbar, discharged it in person, as also Paterson. Dr. Hill suggests that "Lyttelton some time after his appointment in December, 1744 (as Lord of the Treasury) may have offered the post to Thomson. Thomson did not possibly care to go out to Barbadoes and perhaps secured the transference of the post to his old friend William Paterson . . . Some private arrangement, I suggest, was made that Paterson should pay to Thomson a portion of the salary of £400."

that Benjamin Victor was driven to protest against their exhibition of zeal on Thomson's behalf, in the "Daily Advertiser." "We all plainly see by what interest the author of 'Tancred and Sigismunda' was supported; a very remarkable new Lord of the Treasury was proud of appearing its foster-father at all the rehearsals, and on the first night of the performance, he and his friends in the box with him were seen clapping their hands violently at the following remarkable speeches."

The two were attacked in verse also:

"What tho' thy tedious scenes are void of fire,  
They'll do if Pitt and Lyttelton admire;  
They lead the fashion, fashion governs all,  
Attends their nod, or waits on Russell's call."

During 1745, the Pelham Ministry carried on the war against Spain without much success, much in the same way as Walpole had done. The Rebellion of 1745 gave a great deal of anxiety to the Ministry, but it was soon tided over. There was peace and quiet for some time, but trouble soon came from another quarter, and Pelham felt quite ill at ease. Pitt, eagerly biding his chance, had waited for a year, and the promised post had not yet come; he commenced worrying and harrassing Pelham and the Cabinet. Even Lyttelton felt uneasy as he saw the growth of his ambition, if Horace Walpole is to be believed when he wrote: "Pitt's wild ambition cannot content itself with what he had been granted, and he has driven Lyttelton and the Grenvilles to adopt all his extravagances. But then they are at variance within themselves. Lyttelton's wife hates Pitt and

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1. G. C. Macaulay: Thomson. (E. M. L. Series), p. 60.



does not approve of his governing her husband and hurting their family, so that at present it seems he does not care to be a martyr to Pitt's caprices."<sup>1</sup> Pitt and Lyttelton were, however, still good friends, in spite of a few differences.

In February, 1746, Pelham had no option but to ask the King to grant Pitt the place he desired in the Government. The King would not listen to the proposal, and straightway refused to take in Pitt. Pelham and the Administration resigned, as they were convinced they could not hold office in peace, unless they took Pitt in as one of them. Carteret, now Lord Granville, who was summoned by the King, made an effort to form a Government. He took the reins of office, but the Cabinet lasted only forty hours. During that brief period they found they could get no majority or support in the House and gave up the task. The humiliated King had perforce to send for Pelham to form the Ministry as before, and Pitt was appointed Paymaster-General of the Forces.

Thus emerged a stronger and more powerful coalition Government. It had few enemies, and they were men with no backing. Yet the Pelham Administration achieved little; there followed a lull in politics which lasted for nearly seven or eight years.

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1. Toynbee: Letters of H. Walpole. 3rd January, 1746. Vol. 2, p. 165.

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All attempts, however, failed; on the 19th January, Lucy Lyttelton, at the age of twenty-nine, breathed her last, to the intense grief of her husband and his family.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Lyttelton was well known in London, and her death came as a shock to her numerous friends. "Poor Mrs. Lyttelton," wrote Mrs. Delany, "has left a most disconsolate mother and an afflicted husband. She was happy in this world according to our notions of happiness and was an agreeable and deserving woman, which makes her much lamented. Her own great imprudence, it is thought, occasioned her death."<sup>2</sup> Sir Thomas felt deeply the loss of his daughter-in-law, and was anxious about the effects of the bereavement on his son. "As much prepared as I was for the fatal stroke, I never felt so great a shock in my life as the news of my dear daughter-in-law's death gave me. You may easily judge, then," he wrote to Charles, his second son, "how necessary it is for my dear George to fortify himself that he may not sink under this severe affliction." Bolingbroke wrote to Lyttelton a letter full of sympathy. "I could not

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Her speech was the melodious warbling of

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Her eloquence was sweeter than her song,

Soft as her heart, and as her reason strong;

Her form each beauty of her mind expressed,

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Lyttelton's Complete Works, 1776, Vol. 3, p. 158.

2. Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Dawes, 21st January, 1747.  
'Autobiography and Correspondence of Mrs. Delany'—Lady Llanover, 1861-62, Vol. 2, p. 451.

joined by a small sister, who was named Lucy. Mrs. Lyttelton entertained her husband's guests whenever they came to Hagley, and they were all pleased with her gracious hospitality and winning manners. As Thomson had written in 1743, husband and wife had nothing but,

Unutterable happiness! Which love  
Alone bestows, and on a favour'd few."

((" Spring "))

The 'unutterable happiness' was, however, short-lived. Death cut it short with a tragic suddenness that left Lyttelton stunned and overpowered by grief. On January 19, 1747, his beloved wife died, after giving birth to a third child, a girl. A fortnight after the confinement she had caught a chill, and then she became seriously ill: to the last, there were hopes that the illness would not be fatal. Lyttelton had written to his father two days before the end (his father, away from Hagley, had fallen ill, owing to an aggravation of rheumatism, his usual malady): "Last night all my thoughts were employed on you; for when I went to bed, my poor Lucy was so much better that we thought her in a way of recovery; but my uneasiness for you kept me awake the greater part of the night, and in the morning I found she had been much worse again, so that our alarm was as great as ever; she has since mended again, and is now pretty near as you heard last post. . . . . The doctors pronounce nothing positively about her. My heart has gone through as severe a test as it can well sustain. . . . Your most afflicted, but most affectionate son."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Complete Works, 1776. Vol. 3, pp. 320-21.

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resolve to write to you sooner, and I cannot defer doing it any longer. You sustain a loss the best souls must feel the most. . . . I mingle my tears with yours, and I feel, whilst I am writing, all that a tender respect for the memory of the dead, and a tender friendship for the living, can pour into the heart of a man that loves and honours you."<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton indeed felt his sorrow acutely. A letter to Doddridge gives us the measure of his grief: "She is dead, Sir, she is dead, and has hardly left her equal upon earth for every excellence that could adorn a woman. . . . What I suffered during her illness and at her death no words can express. . . . In spite of myself my thoughts return to her sick-bed, to her last tender terms, to her dying looks, words and actions; and then all my fortitude dissolves in tears."<sup>2</sup>

In such deep grief, and with true inspiration, was written a few months later, the 'Monody to the Memory of a Lady lately deceased,' to consecrate her memory, and give expression to the profound sorrow of the bereaved husband, the feelings recalled by past felicity in present grief, and the virtues and attainments of the departed. It is the longest poem by Lyttelton, and considered by many, with some justification, as his best. It was reprinted separately twice or thrice, and included in numerous anthologies. The 'Monody' is written in the form of a long irregular ode, more or less pseudo-Pindaric, composed of nineteen stanzas of unequal length; the lines vary in their syllables, and the consequent variety adds a

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1. Phillimore, p. 293.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 373-74.

certain charm and beauty to the elaborately lyrical verse. The poem breathes the sincere grief of an afflicted husband and father; the recollection of married happiness, and of Lucy's sweet presence in the Hagley woods, the loneliness of the children, the grace and accomplishments of Lucy, all these are conjured up by the poet; and send him to bitter weeping, and almost despair in divine justice. But the poem ends in a calm spirit: God's mercy is great and we dare not question His will.

The 'Monody' is excellent in parts for its poetic imagination and simple expression of grief. At times, however, the strained effort at poetry is too obtrusive to be overlooked; pomp and profusion in words spoil the effect. The poem is thus uneven in merit. There are a few reminiscences of Milton's 'Lycidas,' which the poet evidently had in mind as a model:

Where were ye, Muses, when relentless Fate,  
From these fond arms your fair disciple tore?

(Monody, St. 7.)

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the  
remorseless deep,  
Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?

(Lycidas, lines 50-51)

Similarly, in the eighth stanza, there is a long list of classical and mythological names, introduced with some skill, but without half the music and effect that are created by Milton's extraordinary skill in the use of names in 'Lycidas.' Milton generally uses the decasyllabic verse, whereas Lyttelton uses lines of varying length. Although the 'Monody,' as a personal elegy, possesses some distinction, it can bear no comparison with 'Lycidas' with its exquisite harmony, its perfection of verbal finish, and its

beautiful music. The faults of the 'Monody' are, as has been said before, its unevenness, and occasional lapses into a florid diction, unsuitable to the elegy of personal grief. It is equal in merit to Tickell's elegy on Addison, though it has not the stateliness and dignity of the closing lines in the latter, but is perhaps, both in passionate feeling and felicity of expression, superior to Pope's "Elegy in Memory of an Unfortunate Lady."

The pastoral element in the 'Monody' is more pronounced than it ought to be; the following lines are perhaps the least jarring to the reader:

Ye tufted groves, ye gently-falling rills,  
 Ye high o'ershadowing hills,  
 Ye lawns, gay-smiling with eternal green,  
 Oft have you my Lucy seen.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*

Oft would the Dryads of these woods rejoice,  
 To hear her heavenly voice  
 For her despising, when she deign'd to sing,  
 The sweetest songsters of the spring;  
 The woodlark and the linnet pleas'd no more;  
 The nightingale was mute,  
 And every shepherd's flute,  
 Was cast in silent scorn away,  
 While all attended to her sweeter lay.

In some places, Lyttelton's pastoralism is at its worst, and Horace Walpole, seizing on them, had very little good to say of the poem: but Gray could not bring himself to condemn the 'Monody' in this fashion. He admired 'six good prettyish lines'<sup>1</sup> in the well-

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1. The Correspondence of Gray, Walpole, West and Ashton, ed. P. Toynbee, 1915, Vol. 2, p. 69.



known fourth stanza, but disapproved of the more florid portions of the poem. "I am not totally of your mind," he wrote to Walpole in November, 1747, "as to Mr. Lyttelton's elegy, though I love kids and fawns as little as you do. If it were all like the fourth stanza, I should be excessively pleased. Nature and sorrow and tenderness are the true genius of such things: and something of these I find in several parts of it (not in the orange tree). Poetical ornaments are foreign for the purpose, for they only show a man is not sorry . . . and devotion worse; for it teaches him, that he ought not to be sorry, which is all the pleasure of the thing."<sup>1</sup> Gray's criticism is mostly just, but there is no doubt that he liked the poem, in spite of its 'kids and fawns.' He called Lyttelton 'a gentle elegiac person,'<sup>2</sup> and in another letter he wrote, "Have you seen Lyttelton's Monody on his wife's death? There are parts of it too poetical and stiff: but others are truly tender and elegiac as one would wish."<sup>3</sup> The lines that Gray warmly praised are real poetry, and have been often quoted:

In vain I look around  
O'er all the well-known ground  
My Lucy's wonted footsteps to descry:  
Where oft we used to walk,  
Where oft in tender talk,  
We saw the summer sun go down the sky,  
Nor by yon fountain's side,

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1. The Correspondence of Gray, etc., Vol. 2, November, 1747, p. 88.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 91.

3. The Works of Gray, ed. Sir Edmund Gosse, 1884, Vol. 2, p. 180.

Nor where its waters glide  
Along the valley can she now be found.

(Sta. 4.)

The succeeding lines are almost as good:

O Shades of Hagley, where is now your boast?  
Your bright inhabitant is lost.

You she preferr'd to all the gay resorts

Where female vanity might wish to shine,  
The pomp of cities and the pride of courts.

Her modest beauties shunn'd the public eye;

To your sequester'd dales,  
And flower-embroider'd vales,

From an admiring world she chose to fly:  
With Nature there retir'd and Nature's God,

The silent paths of wisdom trod,  
And banished every passion from her breast,

But those, the gentlest and the best,  
Whose holy flames with energy divine

The virtuous heart enliven and improve,  
The conjugal and maternal love.

The poet then laments for his poor 'sweet babes':

Who now your infant steps shall guide?

Ah! Where is now the hand whose tender care,

To every virtue would have form'd your

youth?

The lines that follow describe her wit, reason,  
grace and fancy, and among her qualities she had

A spirit that with noble pride

Could look superior down,

On fortune's smile or frown,

and

A prudence undeceiving, undeceived,

That not too little nor too much believed,

That scorned unjust Suspicion's coward fear,  
And without weakness knew to be sincere.

The thirteenth stanza has the 'orange tree' that Gray took exception to. It has been quoted before in these pages;<sup>1</sup> while it is no doubt florid in style, it has a beauty of its own. In the fifteenth, the poet says that his grief is greater than Petrarch's was, for Petrarch had neither married Laura nor enjoyed domestic felicity:

Nor did her fond affection on the bed  
Of sickness watch thee, and the languished head  
Whole nights on her unwearied arm sustain,  
And charm away the sense of pain.

The eager recollection of mutual joys and tasks is now awakened and the poet's despair deepens. But the pious Lyttelton is afraid to think that he can doubt God's mercy, and the Monody ends, undoubtedly in a weak manner, with a long religious injunction to the poet's soul, "not to dare the all-wise Disposer to arraign, or . . . With impious grief complain."

Lyttelton's second prose work of importance was published about the same time as the 'Monody,' perhaps slightly earlier, in the spring of 1747. A religious tract entitled, "Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul," it was written by Lyttelton for converting Thomson to belief in the Christian revelation. A letter to Thomson, of the 21st May, 1747, tells us what prompted Lyttelton to write the work: "How grievously has our family felt within these few months the condition of mortality and the uncertainty of our happiness! . . . I will say no more on this subject, your mind will supply

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1. See pp. 130-31, *ante*.

the rest. My refuge and consolation is in philosophy—Christian philosophy, which I heartily wish you may be a disciple of, as well as myself. Indeed, my dear friend, it is far above the Platonic . . . I have sent you a pamphlet upon a subject relative to it which we have formerly talkt of. I writt (sic) it in Kew Lane last year and I writt it with a particular view to your satisfaction. You have therefore a double right to it, and I wish to God it may appear to you as convincing as it does to me, and bring you to add the faith, to the heart of a Christian.”<sup>1</sup>

The aim of the book was to demonstrate the divine origin of the Christian revelation, and Lyttelton bases all his arguments on the account of the conversion and apostleship of St. Paul as given by the saint himself, and on his sermon to King Agrippa. Lyttelton examines the evidence in the Epistles of St. Paul, and successfully proves to the reader that St. Paul was neither an impostor, nor an enthusiast, the dupe of his own heated imagination, nor a dupe of clever people practising deception on him. From this, Lyttelton infers that the epistles are true, as also the account of St. Paul’s conversion. Lyttelton finally concludes that the Christian religion, on the score of St. Paul’s conversion alone, is a divine revelation.

The need for writing this religious tract arose out of the doubts of Christianity which had held sway over Lyttelton for a long time. He had been brought up in a devoutly Christian household, but at Oxford, where “religion had dwindled down to a roll-call,”<sup>2</sup>

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1. Phillimore: pp. 306-308.

2. J. R. Green: *Studies in Oxford History*, 1901, p. 30.

Lyttelton must have gradually lost his belief in Christianity. His friendship with men like Cobham and Bolingbroke must have still further shaken his faith in revealed religion. Dr. Johnson, in his biography of Gilbert West, who was a cousin of Lyttelton, says—"These two illustrious friends had for a while listened to the blandishments of infidelity." Nichols, in his 'Anecdotes,' also writes, "Lord Cobham tried to instil infidel principles into West and his cousin Lyttelton when they visited him. Lyttelton stood happily his ground."<sup>1</sup> West was frequently visited by Lyttelton and Pitt; according to Johnson "when they were weary of faction and debate, they used at Wickham to find books and quiet, a decent table, and literary conversation." "There is at Wickham a walk made by Pitt; and what is of far more importance, at Wickham Lyttelton received that conviction which produced his Dissertation on St. Paul."

These statements leave little doubt about Lyttelton and West having been for some time very nearly free-thinkers and unbelievers in the Christian revelation.<sup>2</sup> Johnson says, moreover, in the 'Life of Lyttelton,' "He had, in the pride of juvenile confidence, with the help of corrupt conversation, entertained doubts of the truths of Christianity, but he thought the time now come when it was no longer fit to doubt or believe by chance, and applied himself

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1. Lit. Anecdotes: Vol. 2, p. 708.

2. Horace Walpole wrote from Paris in October, 1765: "For Lord Lyttelton if he would come hither and turn free-thinker once more, he would be reckoned the most agreeable man in France,—next to Mr. Hume, who is the only thing in the world they would believe implicitly." Toynbee, Vol. 6, p. 332.

seriously to the great question. His studies, being honest, ended in conviction. He found that religion was true, and what he had learned he endeavoured to teach (1747) by '*Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul.*'"<sup>1</sup> About 1746, therefore, the two cousins must have been seriously discussing the evidences of Christianity, for at the end of that year West brought out his '*Observations on the Resurrection,*' and within a few months, Lyttelton published his own dissertation in the form of a letter to West.<sup>2</sup> The two books, coming as they did from young men of good standing in society, who were both generally believed to be doubters of the Christian religion, created a great stir and brought upon their authors abuse from a number of free-thinkers and rationalists. Warburton wrote a letter to Lyttelton expressing his indignation at a book full of abuse and blasphemy written by one Annet.<sup>3</sup> They received, however, numerous marks of approval as well. In March, 1748, the University of Oxford made West a Doctor of Laws by diploma in recognition of his work. Lyttelton was offered the degree at the same time, but he declined the honour. A letter, written from Oxford by one T. Hunt to Doddridge in April, 1748, gives the reasons why Lyttelton did not accept the degree. "Yesterday fortnight, the University conferred the degree of LL.D. on Mr. West. . . . It is

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1. *Lives of the Poets*—Johnson. Ed. Hill, Vol. 3, p. 450.

2. According to Nichols, *Literary Illustrations*, Vol. 6, p. 312, Rev. Josiah Durant, the Vicar of Hagley, from 1732 to 1764, is said to have assisted Lyttelton in his work on the tract.

3. Phillimore, pp. 303-305. Peter Annet's book, '*The History and Character of St. Paul examined,*' was published in 1748.

said that the same honour was offered to Mr. Lyttelton . . . but he declined it in a handsome manner, by saying that if he should happen to write anything of the like kind for the future, it might not appear to proceed from any other motive whatsoever but a pure desire of doing good."<sup>1</sup> Johnson warmly commends the book, and calls it a "treatise to which infidelity has never been able to fabricate a specious answer." Warburton described it as the "noblest and most masterly argument for the truth of Christianity that any age has produced."<sup>2</sup> Doddridge, the Non-conformist divine, wrote that it was "the most compendious yet unanswerable demonstration of Christianity proposed in a clear, elegant and nervous manner."<sup>3</sup> Lyttelton's father, a devout Christian, read the treatise with infinite pleasure and satisfaction. "The style is fine and clear, the arguments close, cogent and irresistible."<sup>4</sup>

While there is little exceptional literary merit in the book, the 'Observations on St. Paul's Conversion' is a masterly presentation of the arguments in favour of Christianity as a revealed religion. It became widely popular, and ran into seven or eight editions in the author's lifetime, was frequently reprinted in England and America by religious Societies, even till the end of the last century, and was translated into French twice, by l'Abbé Guénée in 1754 and by Jean Deschamps in 1758.

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1. Doddridge's Letters, 1790. 14th April, 1748. See also Spence's Anecdotes, 1820.

2. Phillimore, p. 300.

3. Doddridge: Family Expositor, Vol. 3. Preface.

4. Phillimore, p. 298.

Lyttelton was by nature a deeply religious man. His intimacy with West, Doddridge, Warburton and Beattie is a convincing proof of his interest in religion. So are the many letters he wrote to Doddridge,<sup>1</sup> and as we shall see later, his last dying words. It is said he used to read William Law's 'Serious Call' every night before he went to bed.<sup>2</sup> With all his unswerving faith in Christianity, however, Lyttelton was no intolerant hater of other creeds. Even as a young man, he writes in the 'Persian Letters' "There is nothing I abhor so much as persecution," and then makes a passionate plea for tolerance. "Proselytism is an absurd and dangerous business." "The beauty of true religion is sufficiently shewn by its proper lustre; it needs no knight-errant to combat for it." In another letter he expresses sentiments which are a just reflection on the bitter theological controversy of the eighteenth century. "A just regard for religion, without which no Society can long subsist, and a weak attachment, to what either folly or knavery may have grafted upon religion, and sanctified under that name—to distinguish these, is the part of a man of sense, and a good man; but to attack both without any distinction, to attack the first because of the last, is at least as far from true religion as superstition itself."

Thomson, for whom the 'Observations' was written, was now a very intimate friend of Lyttelton. The two wrote frequently to each other, and the tone of their correspondence is deeply personal and affectionate. Thomson paid a yearly visit to Hagley

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1. Phillimore, pp. 363-424.

2. Byrom's *Private Journal*, ed. R. Parkinson, Vol. 2, Part 2, p. 634. (Chetham Society Series, 1854), Vol. 32.



in the summer, and spent weeks there much enjoying the countryside. A letter of Shenstone's, of the 20th of September, 1747, describes one of these visits:

"As I was returning from Church on Sunday last, whom should I meet in a chaise with the horses lengthways, but that right friendly bard, Mr. Thomson? I complimented him upon his arrival in this country, and asked him to accompany Mr. Lyttelton to the Leasowes, which he said he would do with abundance of pleasure."<sup>1</sup>

The year 1747 was for Lyttelton a busy one in political work too, both inside the Commons and outside. In April, Lyttelton made a great speech in the Commons in support of the Bill for the removal of heritable jurisdictions in Scotland. It has been printed in his 'Complete Works,' and it deserves all the praise that Lyttelton's contemporaries bestowed on it at the time. Horace Walpole, by no means a great friend of Lyttelton, wrote to General Conway—"We have had a great and fine day in the House on the second reading of the Bill for taking away the Heritable Jurisdictions in Scotland. Lyttelton made the finest oration imaginable."<sup>2</sup> Later in the same letter, there is a caustic comment on Pitt's absence. "Pitt was not there. The Duchess of Queensberry had ordered him to have the gout."

In the summer of the same year there was a General Election and Lyttelton was again returned to Parliament by the borough of Okehampton, but

1. Shenstone: Complete Works, 1791. Vol. 3, p. 126.

2. Letters of H. Walpole: Toynbee, Vol. 2, p. 272. 16th April, 1747. For the speech, see also Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England, 1811, Vol. 14, pp. 43-51.

not without some trouble. The voters were all on his side, but the Prince of Wales, through Thomas Pitt, Lyttelton's brother-in-law, wished to nominate one Montague as a candidate. Lyttelton declared he would so far oblige the Prince as not to stand for Okehampton unless the borough expressly wanted him. The voters were all for Lyttelton, but Thomas Pitt, a man of few scruples, and Ayscough, his other brother-in-law, both combined to force Montague on the unwilling constituency. Montague desired peace, and did not want to inflict trouble on himself and others, when there was no need to do so. In the end, Okehampton stood firmly for Lyttelton, and he was elected to the Commons for another term. A great deal of trouble arose between Ayscough and the Lytteltons, not only owing to this affair, but also to another treacherous act of Ayscough's. Ayscough was Chaplain to the Prince of Wales, and in revenge, he poured all sorts of tales against Lyttelton into the Prince's ears. Thus he successfully created an active breach between Lyttelton and the Prince. A complete rupture followed, due to his machinations, and Lyttelton was furiously angry with Ayscough. One result of the rupture was the loss of their pensions by Thomson and Mallett, who had got them through Lyttelton's influence. Three years later, Ayscough tried to make peace, by attempting to reconcile the Prince to Lyttelton, but in the midst of his efforts, in January, 1751, the Prince died, and they came to nothing. There is a letter written by Lyttelton to the Prince, just after the election incident at the end of 1747. In returning the papers of the Prince, amongst other things, Lyttelton wrote . . . . "It has been my misfortune to have my conduct much mis-

represented to Your Royal Highness,<sup>1</sup> and by one from whom of all mankind I had the least reason to expect such ill offices. I dare assure myself that time and truth will absolutely clear me to Your Royal Highness, but however I may continue to suffer under your unmerited anger, I shall always continue to preserve the most grateful zeal for your service."<sup>2</sup>

In June, 1747, Lyttelton published a "Letter to the Tories" in defence of the Government and himself. Horace Walpole wrote a reply to the pamphlet. "I published an answer to that piece, and called it 'A Letter to the Whigs' . . . as Mr. Lyttelton had been a great enemy of, and writer against my father. It was a careless performance, and written in five days. At the end of the year, I wrote two more *Letters to the Whigs*."<sup>3</sup> Lyttelton's pamphlets provoked a number of replies besides Walpole's, sometimes bitterly personal attacks. It was in the course of this paper-war that Edward Moore, the poet

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1. The Prince of Wales wrote a set of verses on his wife entitled, 'The Charms of Sylvia.' Two stanzas run thus:

" 'Tis not that lovely range of teeth so white,  
As new-shorn sheep equal and fair,  
Nor e'en that gentle smile, that heart's delight,  
With which no smile could e'er compare.  
No, 'tis that gentleness of mind, that love,  
So kindly answering my desire:  
That grace with which you look and speak and move,  
That thus hath set my soul on fire."

Lyttelton, in spite of his forgiving nature, could not withstand the temptation of parodying the Prince's verses. Two of his lines are apt and relevant.

No, 'tis that all consenting tongue,  
That never puts me in the wrong.

H. Walpole: *Memoirs of George II*, Vol. I, p. 435.

2. Phillimore, pp. 242-43.

3. *Short Notes of my Life*—H. Walpole. Toynbee: Vol. I, p. xxxviii.

afterwards recommended to Lyttelton by Fielding for his protection, wrote the 'Trial of Selim the Persian, for diverse high crimes and misdemeanors.' 'Selim' was none other than Lyttelton who had written his 'Persian Letters' under that name, and Moore's poem, published in 1748, was intended as a defence of Lyttelton against Horace Walpole's attacks on him in the three 'Letters to the Whigs.' It was thus, of course, an implied panegyric on the character of Lyttelton, his high talents and learning. The judges who try Lyttelton are Faction, Envy and Clamour, as also 'four of lesser fame,':

"Hypocrisy with smiling grace,  
And Impudence with brazen face,  
Contention bold with iron lungs,  
And Slander with her hundred tongues."

The charges against Selim are that he wrote the 'Treatise on St. Paul's Conversion,' 'By means whereof the said apostle did many an unbeliever jostle'; that because of him, party squibs decayed, and 'the sons of Clamour grew sickly.' Then follows an allusion to the violent pamphlets against Lyttelton, and one of his anonymous defenders.

"Selim, not so strong as tall,  
Beneath his grasp appear'd to fall,  
But Innocence, (as people say),  
Stood by, and saved him in the fray."

The witnesses for the prosecution are Detraction, Hatred, Distrust, Party, Malice and Disappointment. Selim's defence is related at length; and among the witness for Selim:

"Integrity and Honour swore,  
Benevolence and twenty more,  
That he was always of their party."

The sentence given by Faction ends the trial.

“ That you return from whence you came,  
There to be stript of all your fame,  
By vulgar hands; that once a week,  
*Old England* punch you till you squeak,  
That ribald pamphlets do pursue you,  
And lies and murmurs, to undo you,  
With every foe that Worth procures,  
And only Virtue’s friends be yours.”

Moore’s poem drew a good deal of attention, but since the author had not signed his name, Lyttelton did not know who had suddenly espoused his cause. Pelham, the Prime Minister, wrote to Lyttelton praising his poems, and remarked: “ I have always thought it a misfortune for a man, though never so innocent, to be put upon his trial till now. But when there is such an advocate, and such evidence, who would not wish to be the culprit?”

In April, 1748, an interesting correspondence took place between Lyttelton and Bolingbroke in connection with the publication of the “ Idea of a Patriot King,” which was eventually issued in the following year. When this famous essay was first written, Bolingbroke had dedicated it to Lyttelton. Political conditions had changed since the violent Opposition days of 1738, and now Lyttelton desired that the book should not be dedicated to him in print, owing to his political connections with the relatives of Sir Robert Walpole, later, Earl of Orford, whom the book attacked savagely. Lyttelton wrote in the course of his letter: “ Any public mark of your Lordship’s esteem and partiality for me, as it would be the highest honour, so it would be the greatest pleasure to me; but as I am now in the most intimate

connection of friendship with the best friends of the late Lord Orford, it is an honour, which however flattering and agreeable it would be to me in other respects, I am on that account compelled to decline—I must . . . beg your Lordship . . . that you leave out the part that relates to me.”<sup>1</sup> In an endorsement on the copy of this letter, Lyttelton wrote: “This letter was sent upon the publication of Lord Bolingbroke’s ‘Idea of a Patriot King,’<sup>2</sup> which was originally written in the form of a letter to me, I being then in the Prince’s service. I have it in manuscript as it was writ, and in my lord’s own hand.” Bolingbroke graciously assented to this request of his friend to save him from embarrassment. “Every word will be left out of the papers,” he wrote in reply, “which have given so much uneasiness and out of the introduction to them, that may even seem to have been addressed to you. I have had my uneasiness too—of being obliged by your commands to suppress any marks of my esteem and affection for you. . . . As to you, I shall continue to think as I have always thought, with true esteem and a pure affection in whatever situation you are . . .”

In the middle of 1748, Robert Dodsley published his “Collection of Poems by Several Hands,” in three volumes. Among the many who contributed was Lyttelton, who was probably well known to the publisher. Mr. W. P. Courtney writes that “most of the pieces (in the Collection) were submitted to

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1. Phillimore, April 14, 1748, pp. 420-430.

2. ‘A Letter on the Spirit of Patriotism’ was also addressed to Lyttelton. See Camb. Hist. of Eng. Lit., Vol. IX, p. 229.

the judgment of Lyttelton, before they were passed for printing."<sup>1</sup> The acquaintanceship between the two may have sprung up in February, 1739, when Lyttelton and Chesterfield offered to bail out Dodsley, then confined in a 'wretched sponging-house' in Butcher Row, for publishing Whitehead's poem, "Manners, a Satire."<sup>2</sup>

Lyttelton's poems are contained in the second volume of the "Collection"; they include the poems written before 1730, already mentioned, and some new ones—songs to 'Delia' and to 'Myra,' 'Damon and Delia,' an 'Ode in imitation of Pastor Fido,' and a translation of 'Part of an Elegy of Tibullus.'

The songs addressed to Delia are short, simple and graceful. They have no lyrical emotion, but neither are they conventional or merely verse. They are light and sentimental, without any overloading of sentiment; the subject is Love. It is not known who Delia is, whether she is real or imaginary, though Horace Walpole calls Mrs. Boughton, *née* Mary Greville, the eldest daughter of the Hon. Algernon Greville, "Lord Lyttelton's ancient Delia."<sup>3</sup> The first song has a sweet burden, 'Tell me, my heart, if this be love?', which is deserving of a real song:

When Delia on the plain appears,  
Aw'd by a thousand tender fears,  
I would approach, but dare not move:  
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

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1. "Dodsley's Collection of Poetry," W. P. Courtney, 1910, p. 2.

2. R. Straus: Robert Dodsley, 1910, pp. 51-52.

3. H. Walpole: Letters, ed. Toynbee, Vol. 5, p. 109.

If she some other youth commend,  
Though I was once his fondest friend,  
His instant enemy I prove;  
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

When she is absent, I no more  
Delight in all that pleas'd before,  
The clearest spring, or shadiest grove;  
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

The other song to Delia begins well:

The heavy hours are almost past  
That part my love and me:  
My longing eyes may hope at last,  
Their only wish to see.

But how, my Delia, will you meet  
The man you've lost so long?  
Will love in all your pulses beat,  
And tremble on your tongue?

The song to Myra is also quite pretty:

Say, Myra, why is gentle love  
A stranger to that mind,  
Which pity and esteem can move,  
Which can be just and kind?

Is it because you fear to share  
The ills that love molest;  
The jealous doubt, the tender care,  
That rack the amorous heart?

Alas! by some degree of woe  
We every bliss must gain;  
The heart can ne'er a transport know,  
That never feels a pain.





Lyttelton had written a number of other poems also; but they were published much later; some of them in the 'New Foundling Hospital for Wit,' 1771, and the others in the *Collected Works*, published in 1774. They will be dealt with here, however, for the sake of convenience. They are mostly complimentary or occasional. Thus, 'Virtue and Fame——To the Countess of Egremont' conveys flattery in a novel way, in the form of a fable:

Virtue and Fame the other day,  
 Happen'd to cross each other's way,  
 Said Virtue, "Hark ye! Madam Fame,  
 Your Ladyship is much to blame;  
 Jove bids you always wait on me,  
 And yet your face I seldom see:

\* \* \* \*

Said Fame, "Dear Madam, I protest,  
 I never find myself so blest  
 As when I humbly wait behind you!  
 But 'tis so mighty hard to find you!  
 In such obscure retreats you lurk,  
 To seek you is an endless work."

Then follows the compliment in earnest—a lady has been found in whom both Virtue and Fame dwell, as well as beauty and rank. And this worthy lady is the Countess of Egremont.<sup>1</sup> There is a pleasing lightness of touch and ease of manner in this poem, as well as in the lines "To Eliza."

"Cato's Speech to Labienus," from Lucan, is written with some fire and energy, and is slightly reminiscent of Shakespeare.

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1. The wife of Charles Wyndham, his friend at Eton and Christ Church, later Lord Egremont.

What, Labienus, would thy fond desire,  
 Of horned Jove's prophetic shrine inquire?  
 Whether to seek in arms a glorious doom,  
 Or basely live, and be a king in Rome?  
 If life be nothing more than death's delay:  
 If impious force can honest minds dismay?

\* \* \* \*

..... 'Tis known,  
 Our souls allied to God, within them feel,  
 The secret dictates of the Almighty Will;  
 This is his voice, be this our oracle.  
 When first his breath the seeds of life instill'd  
 All that we ought to know was then revealed.

\* \* \* \*

Where'er the eye can pierce, the feet can move,  
 This wide, this boundless universe is Jove,  
 Let abject minds, that doubt because they fear,  
 With pious awe, to juggling priests repair,  
 I credit not what lying prophets tell,—  
 Death is the only certain oracle.

This, Jove has told: he needs not tell us more.

The verses addressed to Lucy Fortescue during his courtship, though they are all occasional, have the quality of delicate tenderness, and sincere feeling.

To ease my troubled mind of anxious care,  
 Last night the secret casket I explor'd,  
 Where all the letters of my absent fair  
 His richest treasure careful love had stor'd.

In every word a magic spell I found  
 Of power to charm each busy thought to rest,  
 Though every word increas'd the tender wound  
 Of fond desire still throbbing in my breast.

So to his hoarded gold the miser steals,  
 And loses every sorrow at the sight;  
 Yet wishes still for more, nor ever feels  
 Entire contentment or secure delight.

Another poem, 'On her pleading want of time,' has a pretty burden, "But that she had not time." A third, upbraiding his love for her coldness towards him, has a true ring:

Your shape, your lips, your eyes are still  
the same,  
 Still the bright object of my constant flame;  
 But where is now the tender glance, that stole,  
 With gentle sweetness my enchanted soul?  
 Kind fears, impatient wishes, soft desires,  
 Each melting charm that love alone inspires?  
 These, these are lost; and I behold no more  
 The maid my heart delighted to adore.

\* \* \* \*

I ought, but dare not try, to love you less.

It is an interesting fact to note that Dodsley's "Collection" of 1748 contains one of William Mason's earliest poems, "The Ode to a Water-Nymph," which has towards its close a eulogy of Lyttelton's character and powers of oratory, as well as of the beauties of Hagley Park, and the merits of the 'Monody.' It was evidently an attempt to secure Lyttelton's patronage; whether it succeeded, it is not known. In a letter of June, 1760, Gray, writing to Mason, calls Lyttelton, "Your old Patron."<sup>1</sup> But this cannot be conclusive, for the panegyric of

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1. The Works of Gray, ed. E. Gosse, 1884. Vol. 3, p. 42.

Lyttelton was dropped by Mason in the edition of 1764, and "concluded according to the author's original idea." Whether Mason never got any help from one whom he expected to turn out his patron, or whether he obtained it and the suppression was necessitated by other reasons, is a matter difficult of decision and perhaps of not much importance.

In May, 1748, Thomson, who had long been engaged on the poem, completed and published the "Castle of Indolence." Several of Thomson's friends contributed to the poem, and Thomson in his turn gave sketches of them, notably of Lyttelton, Quin the actor, Dr. Murdoch and others.

There is a description of Lyttelton, his friend and patron, in a couple of stanzas, which runs as follows:

" Another guest there was—of sense refin'd;  
 Who felt each worth, for every worth he had;  
 Serene yet warm; humane, yet firm his mind,  
 As little touched as any man's with bad;  
 Him through their inmost walks, the Muses lad,  
 To him the sacred love of Nature lent,  
 And sometimes would he make our valley glad;  
 When as we found he would not here be pent,  
 To him the better sort this friendly message  
 sent.

" Come dwell with us! true son of virtue, come!  
 But if alas! we cannot thee persuade,  
 To live content beneath our peaceful dome,  
 Nor ever more to quit our quiet glade;  
 Yet when at last thy toils, but ill apaid,  
 Shall dead thy fire, and damp its heavenly  
 spark,  
 Thou wilt be glad to seek the rural shade,

So to his hoarded gold the miser steals,  
 And loses every sorrow at the sight;  
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\* \* \* \*

I ought, but dare not try, to love you less.

It is an interesting fact to note that Dodsley's "Collection" of 1748 contains one of William Mason's earliest poems, "The Ode to a Water-Nymph," which has towards its close a eulogy of Lyttelton's character and powers of oratory, as well as of the beauties of Hagley Park, and the merits of the 'Monody.' It was evidently an attempt to secure Lyttelton's patronage; whether it succeeded, it is not known. In a letter of June, 1760, Gray, writing to Mason, calls Lyttelton, "Your old Patron."<sup>1</sup> But this cannot be conclusive, for the panegyric of

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1. The Works of Gray, ed. E. Gosse, 1884. Vol. 3, p. 42.

Lyttelton was dropped by Mason in the edition of 1764, and "concluded according to the author's original idea." Whether Mason never got any help from one whom he expected to turn out his patron, or whether he obtained it and the suppression was necessitated by other reasons, is a matter difficult of decision and perhaps of not much importance.

In May, 1748, Thomson, who had long been engaged on the poem, completed and published the "Castle of Indolence." Several of Thomson's friends contributed to the poem, and Thomson in his turn gave sketches of them, notably of Lyttelton, Quin the actor, Dr. Murdoch and others.

There is a description of Lyttelton, his friend and patron, in a couple of stanzas, which runs as follows:

" Another guest there was—of sense refin'd;  
 Who felt each worth, for every worth he had;  
 Serene yet warm; humane, yet firm his mind,  
 As little touched as any man's with bad;  
 Him through their inmost walks, the Muses lad,  
 To him the sacred love of Nature lent,  
 And sometimes would he make our valley glad;  
 When as we found he would not here be pent,  
 To him the better sort this friendly message  
sent.

" Come dwell with us ! true son of virtue, come !  
 But if alas ! we cannot thee persuade,  
 To live content beneath our peaceful dome,  
 Nor ever more to quit our quiet glade;  
 Yet when at last thy toils, but ill apaid,  
 Shall dead thy fire, and damp its heavenly  
spark,  
 Thou wilt be glad to seek the rural shade,





Thomson mentions it in a letter to his friend Paterson, but evidently he did not feel the loss much, as he was now getting a steady income from his poems, and the staging of his plays.

Besides the 'Castle of Indolence,' Thomson finished 'Coriolanus' also, on which he was engaged for some time, a few months before his death. "The tragedy of Coriolanus still hung fire, for one reason or another, and was not actually produced until after the death of the author, which took place at the end of the summer."<sup>1</sup>

Thomson died on the 27th August, 1748, from an attack of fever, caused by chill contracted whilst travelling between Kew and London. His death caused very real grief to his many friends. Lyttelton felt the blow very much and lamented his death often in his letters to Doddridge and other friends. Andrew Millar wrote, "Poor Mr. Lyttelton is in great grief, as indeed are all his friends, and even those that did not know him."<sup>2</sup>

It has already been seen how anxious Lyttelton was about converting Thomson to belief in Christianity. A letter to Doddridge written in November, 1748, three months after the poet's death, tells us how much success Lyttelton's efforts met with.

"Thomson, I hope and believe, died a Christian. Had he lived longer, I don't doubt but that he would have openly profest his faith; for he wanted no courage in what he thought right, but his mind had been much perplexed with doubts, which I have pleasure to think my book on St. Paul had almost entirely removed. He told me so himself and in his

1. G. C. Macaulay: Thomson (E. M. L. Series), p. 71.

2. *Ibid*, p. 72.

sickness declared so to others. This is my best consolation in the loss of him, for as to the heart of a Christian, he always had that, in a degree of perfection beyond most men I have known."<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton joined with Mitchell, another friend of Thomson, in administering his effects for the benefit of his sisters in Scotland. In January, 1749, the tragedy of "Coriolanus" was, with the help of Lyttelton, produced on the stage, and the proceeds of the performance were given to Thomson's relatives. Lyttelton wrote the prologue, an admirable poem, composed evidently under the stress of a very sincere feeling of grief for the departed author. Quin, who took the part of Coriolanus, spoke the Prologue, and it is said he more than merely feigned emotion, when he came to the line:

"Alas! I feel I am no *actor* here."

The lines run as follows:

"I come not here your candour to implore,  
For scenes whose author is alas! no more:  
He wants no advocate his cause to plead;  
You will yourselves be patrons of the dead.  
No party his benevolence confin'd,  
No sect—alike it flow'd to all mankind.  
He loved his friends (forgive this gushing tear;  
Alas! I feel I am no actor here.)

\* \* \* \*

Such was the man—the poet well you know;  
Oft has he touch'd your tender hearts with woe:  
Oft in this crowded house with just applause,  
You heard him teach fair virtue's purest laws:

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1. Phillimore, pp. 408-409.



even after his death, and in 1750, he issued an edition of Thomson's poetical works, in which they were very freely and even violently dealt with. In a letter to Doddridge, he wrote indeed, "You will find this edition much preferable to any other of the form though not entirely free from false prints. Great corrections have been made in the diction." The sweeping alterations made by Lyttelton made it, however, an impossible edition. The description of Fox-Chase and the drinking bout in "Autumn" was transferred to an appendix on the ground that it was burlesque, and unsuitable to the general style. 'Liberty' was recast or rather tampered with in such an arbitrary manner that even Johnson, who had been unable to read the poem in its original form, protested strongly against the manner of treating it as Lyttelton did. Murdoch saved the 'Seasons' from a worse fate; Lyttelton had planned to make a complete revision of the poems, by changing many features of style most characteristic of Thomson the way he himself desired, but Murdoch opposed this fiercely, and the idea was dropped. In a letter to Miller, Murdoch wrote: "And my Lord Lyttelton notwithstanding the generosity and purity of his friendly design, can never make more of it without hurting the author and himself. . . . A detail of my reasons would be needless, it being agreed that an author's works should be presented genuine and entire. If he has written well, well; if not, the fault lieth and ought to lie at his door."<sup>1</sup> Lyttelton had no doubt the best of intentions; he loved and cherished

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1. Thomson's Works, 1762. Also Wooll's Life of Warburton, p. 253.

the memory of Thomson, but he must have been totally insensible to the harm he would have created by his unwarranted, though well-intentioned, correction of his friend's poems.

Lyttelton raised a monument to the memory of his greatly loved friend in the grounds at Hagley. Hugh Miller gives a charming description in his book; of the place which Thomson used to haunt at Hagley, and the prospect that unrolled itself to the eye from there, and conjures up the quiet pleasure, the contentment that Thomson must have felt every time he visited Hagley. 'Half-way up the ascent, where the hillside is indented by a deep, irregularly semi-circular depression, open and grassy in the bottom and sides, but thickly garnished along the rim with noble trees, there is an octagonal temple dedicated to the genius of Thomson—"a sublime poet," says the inscription, "a good man who greatly loved, when living, this retreat."' He was hourly expected at Hagley on one of his many visits, when instead the news came of his death. "He was to have been at Hagley this week," wrote Shenstone, in a letter dated from the Leasowes, in which he recorded his death.

The best portrait of Thomson, drawn by his friend William Aikman, was possessed by Lyttelton, and for a long time it graced the walls of Hagley Hall. It is now hung in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

In August, 1748, Lyttelton went to Tunbridge Wells, one of the most favoured resorts of society in the middle of the eighteenth century. Its shady

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1. Hugh Miller: *First Impressions of England*, 1847, p. 101.

walks were full of promenaders—people from the Metropolis of all sorts and persuasions. The tea-rooms were crowded, and Richardson, the novelist, who was on a visit, wrote to Miss Westcomb, "Here are great numbers of people got together. A very full season, and more coming every day!"<sup>1</sup> Richardson's visit was a memorable one, as it inspired Loggan, the dwarf-artist, to draw that most interesting sketch of "the remarkable characters who were at Tunbridge Wells, with Richardson in 1748." "The scene is the Pantiles at Tunbridge Wells," writes Austin Dobson, describing the sketch, "in the month of August, 1748, when the public was supposed to be eagerly expecting the remainder of 'Clarissa,' a second instalment of which had appeared in the preceding April. The open space in front of the Post Office is crowded with notabilities, whose names, according to the copy of the drawing given by Mrs. Barbauld in her third volume, Richardson himself has been obliging enough to insert below in his own handwriting."<sup>2</sup>

It was indeed a most distinguished gathering that Tunbridge Wells had attracted that season. The sketch shows us the great Garrick talking to Guilia Frasi, the Italian singer; it is interesting to note that, at the end of the season, Garrick wrote to his brother George, that 'Mr. Lyttelton' and he were 'cup and can,' and had become great friends.<sup>3</sup> Then there is Cibber, 'at seventy-five hunting after new

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1. The Correspondence of S. Richardson, ed. A. L. Barbauld, 1804, Vol. 3, pp. 311-19.

2. "Richardson"—A. Dobson, E. M. L. Series, 1902, p. 78.

3. 'Garrick and his Circle'—Mrs. C. Parsons, p. 57.



faces and over head and ears in love with Miss Chudleigh," according to Richardson's description.<sup>1</sup> Miss Chudleigh is seen in the picture between Beau Nash, the *arbiter elegantiarum* of Bath, and 'Mr. Pitt.' Then there is Onslow, the Speaker of the House of Commons, and the famous Whiston, whose hobby, in Richardson's words, 'was showing eclipses, and preaching the millennium and anabaptism to gay people.' Richardson, the 'Anonym,' as he calls himself in the sketch, is seen standing to the right of Lyttelton, with his left hand in his breast, and alone, as it were, in a mood of reverie. Lean, lank and tall, we see Lyttelton talking to Lady Lincoln, and Miss Peggy Banks, who afterwards married his cousin, Henry Grenville.

Lyttelton was one of the many who in vain tried to persuade Richardson to give a happy ending to 'Clarissa.' In a letter of the 7th of November, 1748, Richardson wrote to a friend, just before the concluding volumes of the novel were published, "These (advance copies) will show you, Sir, that I intend more than a Novel, or Romance by this piece; that it is of the tragic kind: in short, that I thought my principal character could not be rewarded by any happiness short of the heavenly. But how I have suffered from the cavils of some, the prayers of others, from the entreaties of many more, to make what is called a happy ending! Mr. Lyttelton, the late Mr. Thomson, Mr. Cibber and Mr. Fielding have been among these."<sup>2</sup> That Lyttelton attempted hard to induce Richardson to give a happy close to the story,

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1. Correspondence: Vol. 3, pp. 311-19.

2. A. Dobson: Richardson, 1902, p. 96.



is confirmed by a letter written by the poet Young to the Duchess of Portland about 'Clarissa': "I think Your Grace knows Mr. Lyttelton. He, Mr. Fielding, Mr. Cibber, all of them, pressed the author very importunately to make his story end happily; but does not Your Grace think it is infinitely better as it is?"<sup>1</sup> Evidently Lyttelton's acquaintanceship was rather embarrassing to Richardson, though, if he erred in his advice, he must have found comfort in the fact that he erred in good company.

We shall now turn to Fielding, and Lyttelton's patronage of and association with that novelist. Fielding, it has been said before, must have come to know Lyttelton about 1736, for the first time after his schooldays. From that year, till almost his death, Fielding was continually in touch with Lyttelton.

In 1741, he published a poetical pamphlet called 'True Greatness,' and dedicated it to George Bubb Dodington. In this, to Lyttelton amongst others, is ascribed that "True Greatness which lives but in the Noble Mind."

In 1743, Fielding opened his third volume of 'Miscellanies' with a poem 'Liberty' inscribed to Lyttelton. Amongst many others, Lyttelton was also a subscriber to the book.

There is an allusion to Fielding's second marriage, which took place in November, 1747, in the first edition of 'Peregrine Pickle,' 1751, though it was dropped in the later editions. The relevant extract will be quoted later, but we learn from it that Lyttelton so far approved the marriage of his friend with Mary Daniel, maid to Fielding's first wife, that

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1. Life and Letters of E. Young: ed. Shelley, p. 226.

he gave the bride away himself.<sup>1</sup> The dates in the register of births at Twickenham show that a child was born within three months of the marriage. It was thus a marriage of justice and expediency, and it is a tribute to the honourable character of Lyttelton that he most likely influenced Fielding to act honestly by the woman whom he later married.

In December, 1748, a year later, through the influence of Lyttelton, who was then a Lord of the Treasury, Fielding was appointed a Justice of the Peace for Middlesex and Westminster. Smollett had his sneer at Fielding for this, and called him 'a trading Westminster Justice.' To his credit, however, it must be said, Fielding acquitted himself honourably in the discharge of his duties, and refused to accept bribes or to 'trade,' as many of the magistrates were wont to do in his days.

About the same time, Lyttelton recommended him to the patronage of the Duke of Bedford.<sup>2</sup> The Duke's 'princely instance of generosity' enabled Fielding to shift to his famous house in Bow Street, and he stayed there for the rest of his life. It is very probable that before this, Fielding must have at intervals enjoyed Lyttelton's hospitality at Hagley; there is no definite record of his stay at Hagley, but the 'Dedication' of 'Tom Jones' to Lyttelton leaves little doubt about it. In 1749, Fielding was appointed Chairman of the Quarter Sessions at Hick's Hall.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Prof. W. L. Cross, however, in the 'History of Henry Fielding,' Vol. 2, p. 61, suggests that Lyttelton's presence was doubtful and 'should be ascribed to mere rumour or ill-natured fiction.'

2. See Preface or Dedication of 'Tom Jones,' First Edition, 1749.

3. The Dictionary of National Biography—Fielding.

Fielding's great work, "The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling," was published on the 28th February, 1749. The author inscribed it to 'the Hon. George Lyttelton, Esq., one of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.' The dedication is a remarkable testimony to the modest nature of Fielding's patron, and to the great ties of friendship and respect between Fielding and Lyttelton. It is evident that Lyttelton must have given monetary help and relief to Fielding at a time when he was probably on the brink of poverty and starvation. It is also just possible that Lyttelton may have suggested a few elements of the plot of the story, though it is useless to speculate on the subject. The dedication makes it clear that it was made without Lyttelton's consent and even against his wishes, commenting on which Sir Edmund Gosse says, "Lyttelton was modest and high-minded and had no desire 'to be fed with soft dedication all day long.'"<sup>1</sup>

The dedication runs as follows:

'Sir, notwithstanding your constant refusal when I have asked leave to prefix your name to this dedication, I must still insist on my right to desire your protection of this work.

To you, Sir, it is owing that this History was ever begun. It was by your desire that I first thought of such a composition. So many years have since past that you may have perhaps forgotten this circumstance . . . . Again, Sir, without your assistance, this history had never been completed . . . . I mean more than that I partly owe to you my existence during a great part of the time which I have

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1. See Article by E. Gosse in Harper's Magazine, 1903 (June), on 'Eighteenth Century Patronage.'

employed in composing it: another matter which it may be necessary to remind you of, since there are certain actions of which you are apt to be forgetful; but of these I hope I shall always have a better memory than yourself.

Lastly, it is owing to you that the History appears what it is now. If there be in this work, as some have pleased to say, a stronger picture of a truly benevolent mind than is to be found in any other, who that knows you will doubt whence that benevolence was copied? The world will not, I believe, make me the compliment of thinking I took it from myself. I care not; this they shall own, that the two persons from whom I have taken it, that is to say, two of the worthiest men in the world, are strongly and zealously my friends.

. . . . . I am not to give up my right to your protection and patronage, because you have commended my book. . . .

In short, Sir, I suspect that your dislike of public praise is your true objection to granting my request. I have observed that you have, in common with two other friends, an unwillingness to hear the least mention of your own virtues; that as a great poet says of one of you, . . . . you

‘Do good by stealth, and blush to find it Fame.’

From the name of my patron, indeed, I hope my reader will be convinced, at his very entrance on this work, that he will find in the whole course of it nothing prejudicial to the cause of religion and virtue.

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Pardon, therefore, what I have said, in this epistle, not only without your consent, but absolutely against it; and give me at least leave, in this public

manner, to declare that I am, with the highest respect and gratitude,

Sir,  
Your most obliged,  
Obedient humble servant,  
HENRY FIELDING."<sup>1</sup>

The 'picture of a truly benevolent mind' is that of Squire Allworthy, drawn from the character of Fielding's great friends and benefactors, Lyttelton and Ralph Allen. In the 'Life of Lord Hardwicke,' it is suggested that the description of Squire Allworthy and of his country residence was taken from Sanderson Miller and his seat at Radway. It is true that Miller was a good friend of Fielding's and that the latter used to visit Radway often. The reference in the dedication, however, is plainly to Lyttelton and Ralph Allen, who 'did good by stealth and blushed to find it Fame.'<sup>2</sup> Miss Godden, in her 'Memoir of Fielding,' gives the evidence for the great friendship between Pitt, Lyttelton, Fielding and Sanderson Miller.

"Before the manuscript (of 'Tom Jones') was placed in the printer's hands, Fielding submitted it

1. The History of Tom Jones, 4 Vols., 1749. Vol. 1, Dedication. For another tribute to Lyttelton's generosity, see 'Tom Jones,' book 13, Chap. I. "And thou, almost the constant attendant on true genius, Humanity, bring all thy tender sensations. If thou hast already disposed of them all between thy Allen and thy Lyttelton, steal them a little while from their bosoms."

2. Pope: Dialogue 1, l. 136.

"Let low-born Allen with an awkward shame,  
Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame."  
'Low-born'—later 'humble.'

For further evidence that it was Allen and not Miller, see R. Graves, 'The Triflers,' 1806, p. 67.

to the opinion both of the elder Pitt and of the estimable and pious Lyttelton; and the account of this memorable meeting is given in the words of Rev. George Miller, great-grandson of Sanderson Miller of Radway, Warwickshire, who numbered many men of note among his acquaintance, and with whom Fielding was on terms of intimate friendship. Writing to the present writer, in 1907, Mr. Miller says:

‘ Lord Chatham and Lord Lyttelton came to Radway to visit my ancestor, when Lord Chatham planted three trees to commemorate the visit and a stone was placed between them. Fielding was also of the party, and read ‘ Tom Jones ’ in manuscript after dinner for the opinion of his hearers before publishing it. My father told me this often and he had the account from his grandmother, who survived her husband several years, and who was the hostess on the occasion.’<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton and Pitt helped Fielding a great deal in pushing the sale of ‘ Tom Jones.’ This is evident from a letter in ‘ Old England,’ the journal so violently opposed to Fielding. ‘ Aretine ’ writes an open letter to ‘ Selim Slim ’ (*i.e.*, Lyttelton, as the author of the ‘ *Persian Letters* ’ ‘ from Selim to Mirza ’): “ Not only the Dedication, but common fame is full of the warm commendations you have

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1. G. M. Godden: Henry Fielding, A Memoir, 1910, p. 179. In his ‘ Rambles round Edgehill,’ 1900, the same correspondent, Rev. George Miller says, “ It was when the Earl (of Chatham) was staying at Radway with George, Lord Lyttelton, and Henry Fielding, that the great novelist read his manuscript of ‘ Tom Jones ’ in the dining-room of Radway Grange, to obtain the opinion of that distinguished audience before he offered it to the publishers.” P. 30.

given of the aforesaid *Romance*. You have run up and down the Town, and made visits and wrote letters merely for that purpose. You puffed it up so successfully about Court, and among placemen and pensioners, that having catched (sic) it from you, they thought it incumbent upon them to echo it about the coffee-houses . . . . By the care of Yourself and Brother Deserter . . . . yclept the Poet (Lyttelton) and the Orator (Pitt) !—he (Fielding) has been so improved and polished. . . . ”<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton's patronage of Fielding was a topic frequently dwelt on, in the literary and journalistic warfare between Fielding and his adversaries. “Old England,” a political journal by ‘Jonathan Free,’ was one of the first to attack Fielding's ‘Covent Garden Journal.’ In January, 1751, just about the time Fielding had published his third number, *Old England* came out with an attack on ‘*Harry Foolding*.’ Mr. G. E. Jensen, the editor of the *Covent Garden Journal*<sup>2</sup> writes:

“An inordinate desire for Fame, the author alleges, had led *Foolding* too far, so that now he is infamous in his works and in his influential friends. To represent this ‘delectable scene,’ the author presents the fragment of a ‘Farce not intended for the Press, tho’ now acting.’ In this *Harry Peg'em* (for Pelham, Prime Minister) appears in great disorder and quite distracted over the political troubles of his government. *Little-bones* (for Lyttelton, a member of the Government) enters and calms Peg'em somewhat by assuring him that he has found a way

1. ‘Old England,’ 27th May, 1749.

2. G. E. Jensen: *The Covent Garden Journal*, 2 Vols., 1915.

to keep the public in ignorance of the true state of affairs:

Peg.: O! What! the old practice? But who can you find fit for the purpose? The last fellow will never have the impudence to appear again, since the people hiss'd down his *Jacobite* Buffoonery. (This is a reference to Fielding's 'The Jacobite's Journal.')

Lit.: Pray don't you judge the man's abilities without knowing them. I know them very well, and I know, too, he has the impudence to do anything—I had sent for him before I saw you, foreseeing the Necessity for some public Amusement. I have appointed him to be here, and expect him every—O, here he comes—

SCENE IV. *Enters Foolding, with a chew of Tobacco in his mouth.*

Folding: With humble submission (spitting out the Tobacco which embarrassed his speech)—You need but tell your servant your commands, and they are done.

Lit.: Will you resume your old calling?<sup>1</sup>

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1. There can be little doubt that Fielding was a great partisan of Lyttelton's, and more than once defended his patron with zeal. Prof. W. L. Cross says: "It was not safe to attack Lyttelton while Fielding was alive—Fielding riddled young Walpole's replies (to Lyttelton's 'A Letter to the Tories') with fact, sarcasm and contempt." 'History of Fielding,' Vol. 2, pp. 79-80. See 'The Jacobite's Journal' for 2nd April, 1748, and also for 16th July, 1748, where Fielding defends both Lyttelton and Moore who wrote 'The Trial of Selim the Persian (otherwise Lyttelton)' in the 'Proceedings of the Court of Criticism.' Reprinted in 'Gentleman's Magazine,' July, 1748.



Foolding: Which of them? Not puppet-showing, I hope.

Lit.: No—the quill—some reasons require another Literary Campaign. You shall have double the appointments you had before, as an Encouragement; but you must double the duty too, or you will not proportion it to the occasion.

Foolding: You know, Gentlemen, I am all Obedience—the purse-keepers are Masters all over the world.

Peg.: Well, Mr. Foolding, you know the Business. *Verbum sap*—Mr. Littlebones and I will leave you to manage the rest, while we employ ourselves in another urgent business. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton was often called 'Selim Slim' in *Old England*, being the author of the 'Persian Letters' from Selim to Mirza. An open letter from 'Aretine' loudly blames Lyttelton (Selim Slim) for "taking into his service the outcasts of the playhouse, the refuse of the booksellers, the jest of authors and the contempt of every ingenious reader!" Mr. Jensen suggests that it is more than probable that Lyttelton, along with Garrick, Murphy and Allen, was a contributor to the 'Covent Garden Journal.'<sup>2</sup>

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1. G. E. Jensen: *The Covent Garden Journal*, 1915, Vol. 1, pp. 48-49. See 'Old England' of 11th January, 1752. Austin Dobson also says: 'It may well be that some of them (the Papers in the *Covent Garden Journal*) should have been signed by Lyttelton or Murphy.' *Side-Walk Studies* (*World's Classics*), 1924, p. 82.

2. G. E. Jensen: *The Covent Garden Journal*, 1915, Vol. 1, p. 105.

In January, 1750, Fielding published an 'Inquiry into the increase of robbers in London, with suggestions for remedies,' and dedicated it to Lord Hardwicke, Lord High Chancellor.<sup>1</sup> The 'Inquiry' attracted great attention, and led to a Parliamentary Committee being appointed "to revise and consider the Laws in being, which relate to Felonies and other offences against the peace." It is interesting to note that Pitt and Lyttelton both served on this Committee.

Fielding died in 1754, broken down by ill health and misfortune. Lyttelton gave him real help and sympathy during the last fifteen years of his life, and contributed not a little towards his advancement. "Lyttelton's patronage," writes Nichols in his 'Anecdotes,' "alleviated Fielding's sufferings. His friendship to our author softened the rigour of his misfortunes while he lived . . . . Lyttelton did justice to his memory when he was dead by defending him . . . . In the opinion of Lyttelton, 'Fielding had more wit and humour than Pope, Swift and all other wits put together.'"<sup>2</sup>

We shall now return to events at Hagley Hall. In the summer of 1748, Lyttelton lost his mother, the gentle mistress of Hagley Hall. She was deeply loved by her children, whose care, even when they became old, was always her first duty. She was indeed a "lady of excellent piety, and of a most gentle and sweet disposition," as her son wrote in her epitaph.

Towards the beginning of 1749, Lyttelton's thoughts slowly turned towards a second marriage.

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1. Godden: *Memoir of Fielding*, p. 232.

2. Nichols: 'Anecdotes,' Vol. 3, pp. 357-83. Also see J. Beattie: *Dissertations, Moral and Critical*, 1783, p. 571.

Hagley Hall badly needed a hostess; Lyttelton, too, was not the sort of man to remain for long a lonely widower. He strongly felt the need of a partner in life, who could, like his late wife, share his interests and bring him happiness. Thomson had written to him in December, 1747: "If you cannot again love so exquisitely as you have done, so much the better; you do not then risk being so miserable. To say that one cannot love twice is utterly unphilosophical. . . . The flame of any love was never so strong yet as to burn out the heart; so far from that, the powers of the mind rather grow by exercise. The truth is, it is not a former passion that prevents a second. . . . If you could get so much master of your first grief as to think of a second match, I may be tempted also to try to be happy with you."<sup>1</sup>

At an unlucky moment in his life, Lyttelton took the poet's advice; he resolved to marry again, and became engaged about April, 1749, to Elizabeth Rich, the eldest daughter of Sir Robert Rich, at one time Governor of Gibraltar. They did not love each other deeply or passionately, but Lyttelton chose her for his second wife in the hope that as she had been a great friend of his late wife, she might be able to make him happy. In his cousin West's letter to Doddridge,<sup>2</sup> there is a sketch of Miss Elizabeth Rich. "The lady he (Lyttelton) has pitched upon is Miss Rich; she was an intimate friend of his former wife, which is some kind of proof of her merit; I mean of the goodness of her heart, for that is the chief merit which Mr. Lyttelton esteems; and I hope she will not

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1. Phillimore: *Memoirs of Lyttelton*, p. 313.

2. Letters to and from P. Doddridge, 1790, Letter of June 17, 1747, from West to Doddridge.

in this disappoint his expectations; in all other points she is well suited to him, being extremely well accomplished in languages, music, painting . . . . . very sensible and well-bred. I thought this short account would be acceptable to you, who interest yourself so much in everything that concerns Lyttelton."

They were duly married on the 10th August, 1749, and for some time things went smoothly. Thereafter, the marriage proved totally unhappy, and, as will be seen later, led to a separation. There were no children born of this marriage.

Thus the seven or eight years after 1742 were full of event for Lyttelton—most of it being sorrows and misfortune. He lost his mother and his dearly-loved wife; he married again, but only to his bitter regret a few years later. Death deprived him, too, of his intimate friends, Pope and Thomson. In politics he was more fortunate; he rose to a place in the government of Pelham, and was thus in a position to help substantially a friend and a genius in distress, Fielding.

Towards the end of this period, from 1747 onwards, he was busy with the transformation of the park at Hagley into a landscape-garden. How the landscape school came into gardening, and how his relations with Shenstone, the poet and designer of the "Leasowes," suffered by his work at Hagley, will be related in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER VII

### SHENSTONE, LYTTTELTON AND LANDSCAPE-GARDENING

Shenstone and Lyttelton were neighbours for a fairly long time at Hagley. The affinity of poetry and gardening brought them together and added zest to their friendship. It has often been suggested that there grew later an undesirable jealousy between them, from the emulation of developing the grounds at the Leasowes and Hagley on the lines of landscape-gardening then in fashionable vogue all over England. There arose indeed an unfortunate misunderstanding between the two, but as will be shown later, friends on either side tried to magnify it into jealousy and spite.

The early part of the eighteenth century was marked by a just revolt against the 'formal garden' of the previous period, and this, combined with a search for a freer style, led to the growth of a new school in gardening—the landscape-school. The 'formal garden' of Queen Elizabeth's time had been square in shape and usually enclosed by a high brick or stone wall covered with rosemary. The garden was laid out strictly in connection with the house, the two being connected by flights of steps, and broad straight walks, called 'forthrights,' between cut trees. These trees did not look like hedges, but were "clipped to a certain height and allowed to feather naturally at the top."<sup>1</sup> The formal garden demand-

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1. The Hon. Mrs. (Amherst) Cecil: 'A History of Gardening of England,' 1910, p. 223.

ed order in beauty; so proportion, symmetry, and uniformity were considered essential; everything was planned in straight lines, and the flower-beds were geometric in shape. Nature was to be controlled, and the result was the preference of straight avenues to winding paths, and of artificial fountains or canals to natural streams. After the Restoration, the formal garden became greatly subject to the French influence, which brought in statuary, marble basins, complicated fountains and jets, and long and broad terraces. With the accession of William III, the Dutch style of gardening came into favour, and there came about the introduction of exaggerated topiary work, potted plants and shrubs, dwarfed trees, and water-works of " quaint forms and surprise arrangements."<sup>1</sup>

The extravagance of the formal school naturally culminated in a reaction. The second decade of the century saw the rise of acute dissatisfaction with the enclosed garden,—its wearisome symmetry, the clipping of trees, and other whimsical extremes of the formal garden. There came a craving to look beyond the garden. Gradually, attempts were made to harmonize the garden with its surroundings, and as a natural result, the walls were dispensed with, and in a short time, the ' landscape ' style came into existence.

Switzer and Bridgeman were the pioneer gardeners in this respect, although it was really the public taste they followed. Thus Addison and Pope were early exponents of a style in gardening that looked for freedom from the deadening symmetry of ' parterres ' and geometrical designs. In an essay

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1. M. Reynolds: *Nature in English Poetry*, 1909, p. 248.

in the 'Spectator' of June 25th, 1712, Addison showed his decided preference of "the rough careless strokes of nature" to the "nice touches and embellishments of Art." He blamed the English gardeners for deviating from Nature, and complained, 'Our trees rise in cones, globes and pyramids.' Pope followed up this attack the next year with a similar appeal in the 'Guardian,' but in a wittier fashion. The severely-clipped greens came in for fierce satire. "Adam and Eve in yew; Adam a little shattered by the fall of the tree of knowledge in the great storm; Eve and the Serpent very flourishing."<sup>1</sup> Switzer was an admirer of Pope's ideas, and believed that the garden should encroach on the park and the country; he advised the abolition of walls, and the embellishment of the whole estate. Bridgeman, who was in charge of the Royal gardens, was more enthusiastic, and tried to follow Nature by 'diversifying gardens with wildness,' and attempting to give them 'a forest appearance,'<sup>2</sup> though he still adhered to straight walks and high-clipped hedges. Bridgeman also introduced the 'ha-ha,' a device by which the garden was merged in the park and the surrounding country. The 'ha-ha' was so called to express the surprise of finding one's way barred by an obstacle unforeseen, and it was well known in 1724, though yet a novelty. The 'ha-ha' led to the demolition of walls and the beginnings of regular landscape-gardening. In 1728, Batty Langley exclaims, "Is there anything more shocking than a stiff regular Garden?"<sup>3</sup> The

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1. The 'Guardian,' September 29th, 1713.

2. H. Walpole: *Essay on Modern Gardening*, 1785, pp. 51, 53.

3. Batty Langley: '*The New Principles of Gardening*,' 1728.

question tells us how complete the revolt against the formal garden had become.

From this time, the formal gardens were gradually destroyed, and everywhere landowners tried their hand at 'embellishing' the gardens in the new style. Pope 'twisted, and twirled and rhymed and harmonized' his five acres of ground at Twickenham.<sup>1</sup> Although it eventually became a 'complex mimicry of rural scenery,' it was still one of the first protests against the formal school. At Stowe, Cobham put into practice the same ideas, and the new principles were vigorously enforced there, first by Bridgeman and then by William Kent, the most daring of the new faith. Bridgeman had "set the garden free from its prim regularity that it might assort with the wilder country without," but Kent "leaped the fence, and saw all Nature was a garden."<sup>2</sup>

A painter himself, greatly influenced by the landscapes of Claude Lorraine and Salvator Rosa,<sup>3</sup> Kent achieved considerable success in the improving of gardens in the new style. He created at Stowe "the most enchanting of all picturesque scenes;" his method was "to replenish it (the field or park) with beautiful objects, natural and artificial, disposed as they ought to be upon canvas in paintings."<sup>3</sup> Kent's great principle was "Study Nature and follow her Laws"; and again with him as with Pope, all

1. Letter of H. Walpole to Mann: June 20th, 1766, Toynbee: Vol. 4, p. 397.

2. H. Walpole: Essay on Modern Gardening, 1785, p. 55.

3. Italian Landscape in 18th Century England, by Dr. E. Manwaring, 1925, p. 131.

4. Lord Kames: Elements of Criticism, 1762.



gardening was landscape painting.<sup>1</sup> Kent thus became the founder of the new school, and was much in request all over the country.

A wave of enthusiasm for gardening on pictorial lines passed over England. The stimulus came from all directions; from the writings of Addison and Pope, from the efforts at Stowe and Twickenham, from, last but not least, the poetry of Dyer and of Thomson. The landscape and pictorial effects in the 'Seasons,' many of them inspired probably by the paintings of Claude Lorraine,<sup>2</sup> created a desire in the wealthy and the dilettante, to reproduce the Claudian landscape in their own parks and gardens.

Burlington, Leicester, Pelham and Bathurst did in their estates what Temple had done at Stowe, and thus set in a fashion which all gentlemen of property felt it incumbent upon them to follow.<sup>3</sup> "Every Man now," says 'Common Sense' in 1739, "be his fortune what it will, is *to be doing something at his Place*, as the fashionable phrase is." Shenstone was one of the many influenced by the new ideals in gardening, led as the movement was by Pope, and so successfully followed at Stowe, Holkham and Stanstead. He, too, was eager 'to do something at his place,' but the opportunity came only in 1745, when the 'Leasowes' came fully under his control.

Before 1745, there was not much work done at the 'Leasowes.' In the grove consecrated to Virgil,

1. Spence's Anecdotes, 1820, p. 144. Kent believed in "perspective, light and shade"—Walpole: Essay on Modern Gardening, 1785, p. 57.

2. Italian Landscape in 18th Century England: Dr. E. W. Manwaring, 1925, pp. 101-108.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

Shenstone had collected the several rills under the old beeches, made them fall over some rough stones, and conducted them meandering under a small bridge of one arch, with a little obelisk, inscribed to his favourite Latin poet. He had thus "converted a mere dingle into a spot of beauty." There was a little cascade, and a seat also; there was, moreover, a cataract falling over nearly twenty feet, and beauties of a similar kind were scattered over the grounds. After 1745, however, when he came into ownership, he proceeded "to arrange, combine and embellish them." In the words of Johnson, "he began to point his prospects, to diversify his surface, entangle his walks, and to wind his waters; which he did with such judgment and fancy as made his little domain the envy of the great, and the admiration of the skilful; a place to be visited by travellers, and copied by designers."<sup>1</sup> In short, Shenstone proceeded to put into effect all the ideas he had on landscape-gardening, about which he wrote in his "Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening." In a few years, the 'Leasowes' was changed into a spot of marvellous beauty; at least, so it seemed to many distinguished men of his own time. The passage of years has removed many of the delusions concerning the 'Leasowes.' Indeed, even a generation after 1740, there were springing up critics who were not at all pleased with what they saw at the 'Leasowes.' Johnson's mild disapproval was shown in the following words—"Whether to plant a walk on undulating curves, and to place a bench at every turn, where there is an object to catch a view, to make water run

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1. Lives of English Poets, ed. Hill, G. B., Vol. 3, p. 350.

where it will be heard, and to stagnate where it will be seen. . . . demands any great powers of mind, I will not enquire; perhaps a sullen and surly spectator may think such performance rather the sport than the business of human reason." Dr. Aikin, commenting in the 'Letters from a Father to his Son,' wrote in 1793: "The ridiculous aspect of the landscape-garden to attempt to create in a small space the effect of wide plains, or big rivers, or majestic water-falls—in fact, to create a 'country' on a large scale, is beyond gardening; to do in the limits of a few acres, produces only laboured littleness. The tumbling rills of the 'Leasowes' were such miniature cascades that they appeared more like stage scenery than objects of romantic nature."<sup>1</sup>

In its own time, however, the 'Leasowes' had countless admirers. Shenstone soon came to be the most reputed of gentlemen amateurs in his art. As a matter of fact, "he was the first to apply the term 'landscape-garden' to 'our present taste in gardening.'"<sup>2</sup> He was considered successful in the "art of distancing and approximating," and the "disposition of trees"<sup>3</sup> for lengthening vistas; his seats and summer-houses, contrived to show the pictorial effects at their best, were a novelty, and his inscriptions were designed to conjure up to the memory historical and literary associations. Thus, the 'Leasowes' drew visitors from many parts of the country, enthusiastic admirers and critics. The poet, retiring

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1. Dr. J. Aikin: *Letters from a Father to his Son*, 1793. 'Ornamental Gardening,' pp. 138-52.

2. C. Hussey: *The Picturesque*, 1927, p. 131.

3. Shenstone: *Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening*, 1764.

by nature, yet fond of fame, was only too glad to show them his work. He had indeed an inordinate desire to show his garden to the visitors and distinguished guests at Hagley; his letters abound in references to them. The Lytteltons themselves were often at the 'Leasowes,' as a letter written by Shenstone to Jago in 1749 tells us: "I had here last Wednesday, Dean Lyttelton, Commodore West, Miss Lyttelton, and Miss West. They drank tea, and went round my walks, where they seemed astonished they had been so long ignorant of the beauties of the place; said, in general, everything that was complaisant or friendly; and left me highly delighted with their visit and with room for many more."<sup>1</sup>

A year or two after Shenstone had started work at the 'Leasowes,' Hagley caught the fever of embellishment. Lyttelton could not have escaped what had now become a wide-spread hobby. As the intimate friend of Pope, he must have imbibed the poet's ideas on gardening, and been much impressed by the 'variety of scenery on the spot of five acres' at Twickenham. Again, he must have seen the work of Kent and 'Capability' Brown at Stowe, the spacious garden of his uncle Cobham, whom he frequently visited. Finally, as the neighbour of Shenstone, he could not have failed to be impressed by the 'garden scenes' newly created at the 'Leasowes.' Thus it was no wonder that about 1747 or 1748, Lyttelton decided to turn Hagley Park into a 'ferme ornée,' as it has been called. His great friend, William Pitt, afterwards the Earl of Chatham, was also very much interested in the subject. After

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1. Complete Works: 1791, Vol. 3, p. 159.

seeing Shenstone's improvements, it is reported that Pitt made an offer of a substantial sum of money to the poet, and of his own services, and those of Sanderson Miller, the amateur architect and designer, to help him make the 'Leasowes' still more beautiful. Shenstone was grateful, but declined the offer.

So Lyttelton and Pitt started 'embellishing' Hagley. Not that Hagley was without beauty before this. We have a charming description of the park in a letter of Thomson's to Miss Young, written in August, 1743, besides the one in 'Spring,' quoted before in these pages: "The park, where we pass a great part of our time, is thoroughly delightful, quite enchanting. It consists of several little hills, finely tufted with wood, and rising loftily one above another; from which are seen a great variety of at once beautiful and grand extensive prospects: but I am most charmed with its sweet embowered retirements, and particularly with a winding dale that runs through the middle of it. The dale is overhung with woods and enlivened by a stream, that now gushing from deep mossy rocks, now falling in cascades, and now spreading in a calm length of water, forms the most natural and pleasing scene imaginable. At the source of this water, composed of some pretty rills, that purl from beneath the roots of oaks, there is as fine a retired seat as lovers' heart could wish."<sup>2</sup>

Nature had endowed Hagley Park richly enough, but the craving 'to do something,' to achieve the picturesque in landscape, was too strong to let Lyttelton remain idle. He soon began to make

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1. See pp. 131-33, *ante*.

2. Thomson: G. C. Macaulay, 1908, pp. 54-55.

changes in the grounds at Hagley Hall. He was evidently given a free hand by his father in the matter of laying out the park. William Pitt helped him energetically in this task, and when both were in town, Molly West, Lyttelton's cousin, looked after the carrying out of the work. In a letter to her of March, 1748, George writes: "It vexes me that you can't find fencing enough from all my father's woods to enclose the plantation that Pitt marked out for the Cottage. He will be much disappointed not to see it done, and so indeed shall I; much more so than at the delay of the Rotunda, for it is a spot I am fond of, and buildings are better delayed than plantations. However, I daresay you do all you can for our satisfaction, and we must be content with the grand work of the Castle. . . . Sure, you may at least plant the cedar and pines I mentioned in my last, near the Lodge Pool at this time; for evergreens may be planted the whole month of April. . . . I won't answer for Pitt's coming to Hagley at Whitsuntide, especially as there will be no cottage built nor trees planted there; but in the summer I hope we are sure of him."<sup>1</sup>

So the work progressed as the months went by. A ruin with an air of antiquity was considered a very desirable element in landscape-gardening; a 'Castle' was therefore raised at Hagley Park.<sup>2</sup> Sir Thomas

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1. M. Wyndham: *Chronicles of the Eighteenth Century*, 1924. Vol. 1, p. 178.

2. Batty Langley, in the 'New Principles of Gardening,' 1728, has several designs for Roman and Gothic ruins. See also 'Gothick Architecture,' 1742, by the same writer. With Shenstone, a ruin was a useful 'object' for 'the melancholy it excites.' The presence of ruins in the pictures of Claude and

wrote to his son Charles, the Dean, "We have got all the stone from Quarry Hill. The Castle goes on apace, and indeed already makes a grand figure." The Castle was a sham ruin, at the end of a glade with a background of trees, and can still be seen at Hagley. The architect was Sanderson Miller of Radway, a great friend of Lyttelton's, and a well-known amateur designer of gardens and houses in his day.<sup>1</sup> The Castle was built in the Gothic style, of which Miller was a fond devotee and also a skilled exponent, according to Horace Walpole. It served not merely as an 'object' for producing a fine effect in the landscape, but for use also as a lodge for the park-keeper. Lyttelton obtained 'chairs in Gothic form' for harmonising the interior with the exterior. The other objects in the Park, such as the Rotunda, the grotto and the temple, were in classical style, but it was not considered incongruous to have a Gothic ruin alongside of them. An account written in 1777 tells us: "To keep the whole design

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Salvator Rosa is also responsible for the taste for building artificial ruins, that arose in the middle of the century. See also *Gotik und Ruine*, etc. by R. Haferkorn, 1924.

1. "An Eighteenth Century Correspondence," edited by L. Dickins and M. Stanton, 1910, contains a number of letters from Lyttelton to Miller, written between 1749 and 1770. Some of them deal with the construction of the Castle and the Rotunda, and the rebuilding of Hagley Hall, 1754-1759; the rest are either formal or concerned with matters of less interest. Miller was well known to the 'Cousinhood'—the Pitts and the Grenvilles, and also to Hardwicke, the Lord Chancellor, 1690-1764. (See Harris's *Life of Hardwicke*, 1847, Vol. 2, pp. 456-57, where Miller is described as 'remarkable for intellectual acquirement, and ornamental design.') Lyttelton and Pitt stayed often at Radway with Miller and it was during one of these visits, that Fielding read to them the manuscript of 'Tom Jones.'

in its purity, to wipe away any suspicion of its being otherwise than a real ruin, the large and mossy stones which have seemingly tumbled down from the tottering and ruinous walls are suffered to lie about the different parts of the building in the utmost confusion . . . . While to throw a deeper solemnity over it, . . . . ivy is encouraged to climb about the walls and turrets."<sup>1</sup> A ruined abbey of Halesowen furnished the window-frames, which "give the Castle something of a genuine air."<sup>2</sup>

By far the most enthusiastic description of the newly-laid-out Park at Hagley is given by Horace Walpole, in a letter written to Richard Bentley in 1753, when on a visit to Lyttelton:

"You might draw, but I can't describe the enchanting scenes of the Park: it is a hill of three miles, but broke into all manner of beauty; such lawns, such wood, rills, cascades, and a thickness of verdure quite to the summit of the hill, and commanding such a vale of towns, and meadows and woods extending quite to the Black Mountains in Wales, that I quite forgot my favourite Thames! . . . . There is extreme taste in the Park: the seats are not the best, but there is not one absurdity. There is a ruined castle built by Miller, that would get him his freedom, even of Strawberry: it has the true rust of the Barons' Wars. Then there is the scene of a small lake, with cascades falling down such a Parnassus! with a circular temple on the distant eminence; and there is such a fairy dale, with more cascades gushing out of rocks! and there is a hermitage so exactly like

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1. J. Heeley: *Letters on the Beauties of Hagley, Envil and the 'Leasowes,' 1777, Part I, pp. 173-175.*

2. M. Wyndham: *Chronicles, 1924. Vol. 1, p. 179.*



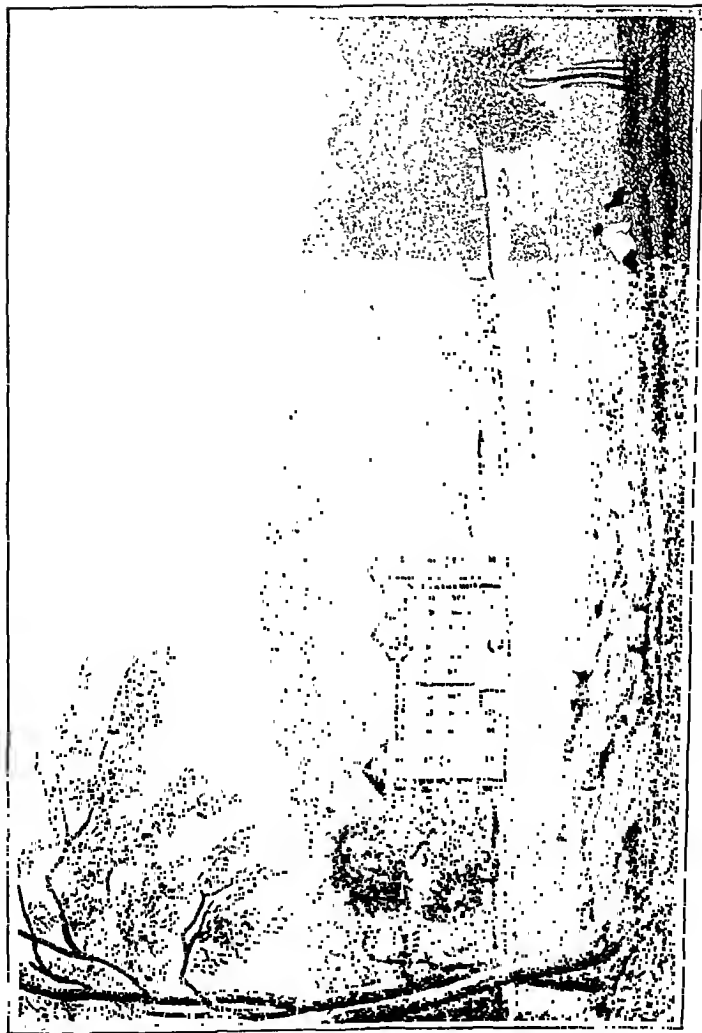
those in Sadeler's prints, on the brow of a shady mountain, stealing peeps into the glorious world below! And there is such a pretty well under a wood, like the Samaritan woman's in a picture of Nicolo Poussin; and there is such a wood without the Park, enjoying such a prospect! and there is such a mountain on t'other side of the Park commanding all prospects that I wore out my eyes with gazing, my feet with climbing, and my tongue and my vocabulary with commending!"<sup>1</sup>

In later letters, he mentions the artificial '*cascatelle*' at Hagley and the shells for the grotto. Countess Temple, writing to Lady Brown in July, 1768, is as enthusiastic as Walpole: "If you were to see the particular place, you would say it was the best calculated for a fairy scene of any you ever saw or could have a notion of. There is a cascade that comes tumbling down a piece of rude rockwork, and runs into a rivulet at the bottom, which loses itself among the stones. The ground is enamelled with different flowers wildly dispersed, and here and there they peep out between the stones on each side, for the rock is continued on to the right and left, so as to admit of several benches cut into it which are covered with moss; very large trees hang over, which shut out the rays of the sun; and this rock or grotto or both, opens on a fine green lawn . . . ."<sup>2</sup>

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1. H. Walpole: Letters, ed. Toynbee, Vol. 3, p. 186.

2. Grenville Papers. Vol. 4, p. 325. For other descriptions of Hagley, see (1) Dr. R. Pococke's 'Travels through England, 1750-1756,' Camden Society Publications, 1888-89, Vol. 1, pp. 223-30, Vol. 2, pp. 233-36. (2) J. Heeley, Letters on the Beauties of Hagley, etc., 1777, and A Description of Hagley Park, 1777. (3) Rev. T. Maurice, Hagley: A Descriptive Poem. Oxford, 1776. (4) H. Miller, 'First Impressions of England,' 1847, Chapters 6, 7, 8.



HAGLEY PARK

With his wealth and his large estates, Lyttelton easily managed to lay out a park that very soon eclipsed the 'Leasowes' in point of beauty and grandeur. Shenstone was always handicapped by the lack of money and the comparatively smaller size of the 'Leasowes.' He soon began to grow unhappy, feeling annoyed and at times overwhelmed by the superior size and splendour of Hagley Park. Even at the beginning he felt the difference, and he writes to a friend in 1747: "The fault is they anticipate everything which I propose to do when I am rich." Again in September, 1748: "I am fully bent on raising a seat unto him (Thomson) in my lower grove, if Mr. Lyttelton does not inscribe one at Hagley *before me*." Lyttelton had an unhappy knack of suggesting alterations or corrections to his poet-friend's verses. Shenstone did not much like this. Two letters of 1754 and 1755 testify to this aversion, natural enough to a mind already irritated by his neighbour's march over him in the landscape-garden. "Sir George thinks some alterations requisite in my verses to which I cannot easily bring myself to conform—but I must." "If the printing of my Rural Inscriptions be invidious, it was altogether owing to the instigation of Sir G. L. . . ."

When matters were in this stage, the friends of Shenstone began to magnify the trouble. They started imputing jealousy, envy and patronising airs to Lyttelton, when he really was in no way so actuated towards Shenstone. Chambers, in his 'Biographical Illustrations of Worcestershire,' gives a

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1. Shenstone's Letters. Complete Works, 1791, Vol. 3. pp. 126, 148, 233, 251.

characteristic instance of the way the mischief worked. "It has been also reported that Lord Lyttelton once spoke disrespectfully of the lady eulogised by Shenstone, by saying—'I have seen his Delia—and such a Delia too!' and that this was carried by some *good-natured* friend to Shenstone, and thus began a coolness: but with regard to his jealousy or envy, one cannot be easily persuaded that a mind, so pure and benevolent as that of Lyttelton's, was ever debased by such unworthy passions."<sup>1</sup> Shenstone was in a similar way made to imagine that his neighbours, being jealous of the 'Leasowes,' would make a visitor look at it 'perversely' as Johnson puts it.<sup>2</sup> Shenstone was peevish and depressed enough without these reports; so when they came, it must have been hard for him to refrain from believing them. Prominent amongst Shenstone's friends, who were guilty of misleading him, was Lady Luxborough, a sister of Bolingbroke's and an ardent member of the 'Warwickshire Coterie.' A letter to Shenstone from this lady, of December, 1749, says: "Is your summer-house yet transformed or does it remain a butt for Mr. Lyttelton and Mr. Miller's censure? They find so much at the 'Leasowes' to raise their envy and consequently spleen, that it is happy for them some one object offers that they can vent it upon." Again, in another letter: "I can less suppose how Mr. Miller could make so absurd a comparison about the 'Leasowes' and Hagley. Would it not have been sufficient for him to have

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1. J. Chambers: *Biographical Illustrations of Worcestershire*, 1820, p. 408.

2. Dr. Johnson: *Life of Shenstone*. *Lives of the English Poets*—ed. G. B. Hill, 1905. Vol. 3, p. 351.

spoke the truth by saying the 'Leasowes' had more beauties than Hagley? . . . . As to myself, I am not ashamed to own that I like even a root-seat at the 'Leasowes' better than I do his modern ruin of an ancient castle; nor is it extraordinary."<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, to find Dr. Johnson<sup>2</sup> writing on the matter as follows:—"Lyttelton was Shenstone's neighbour, and his rival, whose empire, spacious and opulent, looked with disdain on the petty state that appeared behind it. For a while the inhabitants of Hagley affected to tell their acquaintance of the little fellow that was trying to make himself admired; but when by degrees the 'Leasowes' forced themselves into notice, they took care to defeat the curiosity which they could not suppress by conducting their visitants perversely to inconvenient points of view, and introducing them at the wrong end of a walk to detect deception, injuries of which Shenstone would heavily complain. Where there is emulation there will be vanity, and where there is vanity there will be folly."

Graves effectually disposes of this charge against Lyttelton in his reminiscences of the poet:

"A rivalship was supposed to exist between the Lyttelton family and Shenstone, in regard to the pleasure-grounds . . . . Nothing can be more ridiculous; at the time one might as well have imagined a rivalship between Windsor Forest and the Windmill garden at Salthill . . . . The truth of the case is that the members of the Lyttelton family went too frequently to the 'Leasowes' . . . . and unwilling

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1. Lady Luxborough's Correspondence, 1775 (Dodsley), pp. 158, 173.

2. Johnson: Life of Shenstone.

to break in upon Shenstone's retirement on every occasion strolled by themselves without anybody to regularly conduct them through the walks. Lord Lyttelton was also gouty and could not walk much. Of this, Mr. Shenstone would sometimes peevishly complain, though he never really suspected any ill-natured intention in his worthy and much-valued neighbours."<sup>1</sup>

A visit made by Spence to Hagley Hall may have also caused a temporary misunderstanding. "Mr. Spence wrote to Shenstone that he would stay with him a week. This somehow came to Lord Lyttelton's knowledge, and Lord Lyttelton wrote to Spence, and insisted on his making Hagley his home if he came that way. Spence stayed a fortnight at Hagley, but never once visited the 'Leasowes.' Shenstone mentioned this with surprise to the author;—yet this may mean nothing. Spence may have been so rapt in his pleasures and conversation and learning at Hagley that he might well have forgotten or perhaps postponed the idea. Moreover, later Spence apologised to Shenstone."<sup>2</sup>

Shenstone and Lyttelton, in spite of these slight misunderstandings, must have been very sincere friends. The letters of the former are a continual testimony to the great respect and love he had for Sir Thomas Lyttelton and his son, and all the family, except perhaps for Charles Lyttelton, the Dean, who behaved rather haughtily towards the poet. Lyttelton was probably instrumental in the appointment of

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1. Recollection of Some Particulars in the Life of the late William Shenstone, Esq.—R. Graves, 1788, pp. 83-85.

2. *Ibid*, pp. 85-87.

Shenstone as a Justice of the Peace. In a letter written about 1751, Shenstone says: "You tell me, the author of 'Peregrine Pickle' says, 'if you will flatter Mr. Lyttelton well, he will at last make you a Middlesex Justice;' and it happened oddly that, whilst I was reading your letter, a neighbour told me I was put in the commission of the peace."<sup>1</sup> Shenstone had a seat inscribed to Lyttelton at the Leasowes, and Lyttelton raised an urn to the memory of the poet, after his death. Hugh Miller writes, "We see at the head of a solitary ravine, a white pedestal bearing an urn. The trees droop their branches so thickly around it that when the eye first detects it in the shade, it seems a retreating figure, wrapped up in a winding sheet. The inscription is eulogistic of the poet's character and genius. 'In his verses,' it tells us, with a quiet elegance, in which we at once recognise the hand of Lyttelton, 'were all the natural graces and in his manners all the amiable simplicity of pastoral poetry, with the sweet tenderness of the elegiac.'"<sup>2</sup>

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1. Complete Works, 1791, Vol. 3, pp. 184-85.

2. H. Miller: 'First Impressions of England and its People,' 1847, p. 104.

## CHAPTER VIII

### POLITICS (1750-1760)

#### THE ANTIPATHY OF SMOLLETT AND JOHNSON TOWARDS LYTTELTON

Early in 1750, Lyttelton received an interesting letter from Voltaire, to whom he had made a present of Thomson's 'Works,' edited by Lyttelton himself. Voltaire had known Thomson during his stay in England,<sup>1</sup> and Lyttelton perhaps thought it would not be out of place to send the great French writer a copy of his friend's 'Works.' In spite of its occasionally faulty English, Voltaire's reply claims one's attention as expressing his views on English Drama in general and Thomson's plays in particular. It is dated 17th May, 1750, from Paris, and runs as follows:

"You was (sic) beneficent to Mr. Thomson when he lived and you is (sic) so to me, in favouring me with his works. I was acquainted with the author when I stayed in England. I discovered in him a great genius and a great simplicity. I liked in him, the poet and the true philosopher, I mean the lover of mankind. I think that without a good stock of such philosophy, a poet is just above a fiddler, who

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1. Voltaire was in England from 30th May, 1726, to March, 1729. See Churton Collins: "Voltaire, Rousseau and Montesquieu in England," 1908, pp. 7, 114.

It is not probable that Lyttelton ever knew Voltaire in person, for during this period he was mostly at Oxford, and later, on the Grand Tour.



amuses our ears and cannot go to our soul. I am not surprised your nation has done more justice to Mr. Thomson's ' *Seasons* ' than to his dramatic performances; there is one kind of poetry of which the judicious readers and the men of taste are the proper judges, there is another that depends on the vulgar; great or small, tragedy and comedy are of those last species, they must be suited to the turn of mind and to the ability of the multitude and proportioned to their taste. Your nation two hundred years since is used to a wild scene, to a crowd of tumultuous events, to an emphatical poetry mixed with loose and comical expressions, to murders, to a lively representation of bloody deeds, to a kind of horror which never sullied the Greek, the Roman or the French stage; and give me leave to say that the taste of your politest countrymen in point of tragedy differs not much from the taste of a mob at a bear-garden. It is true we have too much words, if you have too much of action, and perhaps the perfection of the Art should consist in a due mixture of the French taste and the English energy. Mr. Addison, who would have reached to that pitch of perfection had he succeeded in the amorous part of his tragedy as well as in the part of Cato, warned your nation against the corrupted state of the stage, and since he could not reform the genius of the country, I am afraid the contagious distemper is past curing.

Mr. Thomson's tragedies seems (sic) to me wisely intricate, and elegantly writ; they want perhaps some fire, and it may be that his heroes are neither moving nor busy enough, but, taking him all in all, methinks he has the higher claim to the greatest esteem. Your friendship, Sir, is a good vouchsafer

for his merit. I know what reputation you have acquired, if I am not mistaken, you have writ for your own sport many a thing that would rouse a great fame to one who had in view that vain reward called Glory. I have by me some verses that pass under your name, and which you are supposed to have writ in a journey to Paris. They reflect very justly on our nation . . . . . (*The lines have been quoted earlier.*) These verses deserve a good translator, and they should be learned by every Frenchman. Give me leave to send you a little performance of mine,<sup>1</sup> 'tis but a pebble I do offer you for your precious stone."<sup>2</sup>

Voltaire was greatly impressed by Thomson's plays, and it has been suggested by Mr. G. C. Macaulay that 'Socrate' is probably based on the English poet's "Agamemnon." From this letter, it appears as if the remark is well justified.

1. I have been unable to discover what the 'performance' was. It may have been 'Semiramis' published in 1749 or 'Oreste,' 1750.

2. Phillimore, *Memoirs*, p. 323-25. I have freely altered the spelling in this letter.

3. Mr. E. L. Allhusen, in a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement*, 31st January, 1929, says he has in his possession a small volume, printed at Amsterdam in 1759, written in French, and entitled, "'Socrate,' Ouvrage dramatique traduit de l'Anglais de feu Mr. Tompson," (sic). (There is a copy in the British Museum also.) The translator, it seems, says in his preface that the author gave the manuscript "à ses illustres amis Mr. Dodington and Mr. Littleton, comptés parmi les plus beaux genius d'Angleterre," and that 'Mr. Littleton' confided the manuscript to the translator on the occasion of his last voyage to Holland. Mr. Allhusen wonders if Thomson ever wrote 'Socrates,' and if so, where the original of the play is to be found. 'Mr. Littleton' is, of course, the subject of this biography.

In September, 1750, Lyttelton was in Paris, and in rather poor health. There is a letter written at the time by Pitt to Lyttelton, advising him to leave Paris and return to England to recuperate. Pitt's physician, Burgess, desired Lyttelton 'not to make great journeys, and to gently ride on horseback for half a post now and then, if the weather be good.'<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, Sir Thomas was fast failing in health. Ailing from gout, and a severe form of heart-disease, Lyttelton's father became weaker and weaker. He did not dare to leave Hagley except on one or two occasions; moreover, he loved the park and its beautiful surroundings. He shared his son's great interest in landscape gardening, and when Lyttelton was away in London, busy with his ministerial work, his father had directed the gardener at Hagley in his task, and helped to keep the estate in repair. In the spring of 1750, Sir Thomas wrote to Charles, his second son:

"I am extreme weak, however do make shift to get out a little, when the weather permits, in my little chair, and was yesterday in the park, and at the taphouse (of the Lyttelton Arms) which will be finished in about a week, and, I assure you, makes a considerable figure, and will be a very commodious inn . . . . The oaks are as much out in the park as I ever remember them by the first day in May. The honeysuckle at the parlour door is in bloom; in short, I believe the oldest man does not remember so forward a spring. I hope we shall have a pretty sprinkling of fruit of all sorts, and some in great abundance."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Phillimore: *Memoirs* pp. 436-37, 20th September, 1750.
  2. Mrs. Wyndham: *Chronicles*: Vol. 2, pp. 10-11.

In August of the following year, Sir Thomas grew so much worse that his sons had to be sent for to come to Hagley and attend to their fast sinking father. Sir Thomas was a brave old man, and he met his death with full courage on September 14, 1751. Molly West, in her account of the last days of Sir Thomas, who was her uncle, relates a very touching incident: 'A few days later he went down again into the parlour, and sat at the table whilst we dined, for he was too ill to eat anything himself, but his attentions to us all and the spirit he gave to the conversation was very remarkable, for I think I never saw him more cheerful or in higher humour. I could not help expressing my surprise to him at his being able to exert himself in such a manner.

"Why, my dear Molly," answered he, "my intention in coming amongst you was to try for the time I stayed to make you all forget the condition I was in; and as I knew this would be my last effort in coming downstairs, I was willing to do my utmost, and I thank God I have enjoyed much comfort and satisfaction—which you, naughty Molly," added he with a smiling countenance, "would have deprived me of, had I given in to your fears. But I knew what I could do better than you did."

He lingered on for some days. On Sunday, the 8th . . . . he said, "You are all tolerably cheerful and go on as I were amongst you. That's just as it should be; and it is the greatest joy to me to have you do so. Let me quietly to my grave: remember me, but don't pine after me." "

A week later, Sir Thomas died, in the sixty-sixth year of his life. Sir Thomas was an amiable old

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1. Mrs. M. M. Wyndham: *Chronicles*, Vol. 2, p. 11.

gentleman with much force of character, and a good father. Lyttelton gives a slightly idealised portrait of him in the 'Persian Letters.'<sup>1</sup>

"He is possessed of a considerable estate which his friends are as much master of as he. His children love him out of a principle of gratitude, by far more endearing than that of duty; and his servants consider him as a father, whom it would be unnatural for them not to obey. The tenants are never hurt by drought or rain, because the goodness of their lord makes amends for the inclemency of the sky. The whole country looks gay about his dwelling, and you may trace all his footsteps by his bounties . . . . . He has also a deep sense of religion which is so far from casting a gloom over his mind that it is to that chiefly he owes his constant serenity . . . . . He is never out of humour, nor is it possible to be so in his company."

On the death of his father, Lyttelton succeeded to the baronetcy, as the eldest son and heir. The political situation was quiet. The Government had a peaceful time till early in 1753, when an Act was passed called the Jewish Naturalisation Act, extending a few more privileges to the foreign Jews settled in England. The legislature had passed it gladly without much debate, but a strong anti-Semitic bias in the country in general, and amongst the clergy in particular, demanded its repeal. Not wishing to lose at the General Election impending, the Government thought it wise to give in to the clamour, and clearly

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1. See Persian Letters, No. 36. Complete Works, 1776, Vol. 1, pp. 253-54. There is a foot-note by the editor at the end of this letter. "This is evidently the portrait of our noble author's father."

against reason, but as a matter of expediency, brought forward a Bill for the repeal of the Act. On this occasion, Lyttelton made a very able speech, which has been printed in his 'Complete Works.' The speech is an honest attempt at looking facts in the face—the danger of inflaming religious excitement by clinging to an Act, and thus, in practice, depriving the Jews of the advantages promised by legislation. It was an attempt at compromise without the sacrifice of principle. The Bill was repealed, but, as Lyttelton had wisely foreseen in his speech, it gave the anti-Semites greater encouragement, and they demanded the withdrawal of privileges that had existed before the Bill was passed. But Pitt's thunder made the mover drop the bill promoted by them.

In the autumn of 1753, Pitt visited Hagley, and

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1. *Extracts from the Speech on the Repeal of the 'Jew-Bill' Act, 1753.*

"Resolution and steadiness are excellent qualities, but it is the application of them on which their value depends. A wise Government will know where to yield, as well as where to resist; and there is no surer mark of littleness of mind in an administration than obstinacy in trifles. . . . Public wisdom must condescend to give way to popular folly, especially in a free country. . . . The very worst mischief that can be done to religion is to pervert it for the purposes of faction. Heaven and hell are not more distant than the benevolent spirit of the Gospel and the malignant spirit of party. The most impious wars ever made were those called *holy wars*. He who hates another man for not becoming a Christian is himself not a Christian. . . . Toleration is the basis of public quiet. It is a charter of freedom given to the mind, more valuable, I think, than that which secures our persons and estates. Indeed they are inseparably connected together; for where the mind is not free, where the conscience is enthralled, there is no freedom. Spiritual tyranny puts on the galling chains; but civil tyranny is called in, to rivet and fix them." *Complete Works*, 1776, Vol. 3, pp. 30-36. See also *Parliamentary History of England*, 1811, Vol. 15, pp. 129-131.

stayed there some time in response to Lyttelton's invitation. They had been close friends thereto, and their political career had lain along the same path. They had a few misunderstandings, but they had been easily overlooked after the occasions had passed. The succeeding year, however, brought to an end an historic friendship dating from school-days. The death of Henry Pelham on March 6, 1754, was immediately followed by the usual scramble for places in the new arrangement. "Now I shall have no more peace," the King had groaned; it was only too true a prophecy. The Duke of Newcastle succeeded his brother as Prime Minister, and a few changes were made, as there were many men hungry for places. Pitt and Fox were there with their insatiable ambition, waiting to be appeased, but Newcastle disliked them both, and feared that their extraordinary ability might be a menace to his own power. Lyttelton became the Cofferer to the Royal Household, a sinecure post that did not tax him much, Grenville rose to the Treasuryship of the Navy, and Legge became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Fox, the Secretary for War, was offered and accepted the Secretaryship of State, but gave it up when he discovered that he was expected to give no trouble and be submissive, leaving all real power in the hands of the Prime Minister. Pitt, on the other hand, was laid down with gout at Bath, and had perforce to remain an idle spectator. Newcastle quietly ignored him, and Pitt was left where he was, as Paymaster-General of the Forces. Pitt wrote to Lyttelton asking him to act for him as intermediary and to induce Chancellor Hardwicke to work for him in his absence at Bath. Lyttelton sincerely tried hard for Pitt, but

Newcastle was politely firm and pleaded the King's hostility to Pitt as an excuse for doing nothing for him. Pitt was furious, but his gout tied him down to Bath. In spite of Lyttelton's honest attempts on his behalf, Pitt grumbled that Lyttelton had deserted him, having himself got the Cofferership. Moreover, Lyttelton refused to listen to Pitt's scheme to oust Newcastle. The idea was to lead a faction within the Government itself, composed of the 'cousinhood' and others, and then to make their own demands, when the Government should be reduced to fall at their feet. The Grenvilles promised to help Pitt in his ingenious and rather unscrupulous scheme, but Lyttelton's sense of loyalty to his chief, and his straightforwardness, made him refuse to have anything to do with it. On this point, too, Pitt felt greatly offended, and believed that Lyttelton was a traitor to the 'cousinhood.' In a paper marked 'Observations' upon Mr. Pitt's Letters of 1754, Lyttelton reviews his relations with Pitt and observes:—"It was quite impossible for me, as a man of honour and integrity, to join an opposition which at the beginning of it in the year 1754, and through the ensuing session of 1755, had not even the pretence of any public cause but was purely personal against the Duke of Newcastle, to whom at the desire of Mr. Pitt,<sup>1</sup> I had given a pledge of my friendship by receiving from him the honourable office of Cofferer a little before . . . to whose brother Mr. H. Pelham,

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i. Pitt had written to Hardwicke, when Newcastle's Ministry had been arranged in April, 1754, "I see with great pleasure the regard that has been had to Sir George Lyttelton and Mr. George Grenville. Every good done to them will be at all times done to me." . . . Phillimore—Memoirs of Lyttelton, p. 475.



I had greater obligations than to any other friend; he having, without any application to him from me, or in my behalf, refused to give the office of the Treasurer of the Navy to Mr. Legge on Mr. Dodington's resignation,<sup>1</sup> till after I had declined the offer of it from him, and having also, but just before his death, most strongly recommended me to the King for a peerage. Nor did I ever give the least hope in any conversation with Mr. Pitt or his friends, after I was made Cofferer, that I would come into any measure to subvert the administration of the Duke of Newcastle, but on the contrary protested very warmly against it, as no less inconsistent with my political system than with my obligations and engagements."<sup>2</sup>

When Pitt got well in November, the storm that was gathering burst on Newcastle and Lyttelton in all its fury. "The thunderbolt," writes Horace Walpole, "known in a sky so long serene confounded the audience." He attacked in turn Murray and Robinson also, and Newcastle felt himself unsafe without either Pitt or Fox in his Ministry.

A few days later, the rupture between Lyttelton and Pitt became open and complete. The excuse came with the following incident. Lyttelton had unsuccessfully attempted to reconcile Bedford with Newcastle. That ever-mischievous imp, Horace Walpole, "carelessly" mentioned the possibility of it to Conway, (suggesting that Bedford was then amenable to offers) who related the matter to Lyttelton. Lyttelton took what he supposed to be a '*carte blanche*' from Newcastle and made his offer to Bedford, who was a partisan of Pitt's. Lyttelton, for

1. Dodington resigned in 1749.

2. Phillimore: *Memoirs of Lyttelton*, pp. 478-79.

all his honest and perhaps foolish negotiations, received a most unpleasant surprise when Bedford in anger straightway declined the offer. Lyttelton did not guess that Walpole had played a trick on him, though to the latter's credit it must be said, he had tried to stop Lyttelton's going to Bedford, but had found it was too late to do so. Bedford told Pitt about Lyttelton's offer, and Pitt thought Lyttelton had tried to humiliate him. "Pitt," says Horace Walpole, "considered he had been slighted and broke openly with Sir George—the Duke of Newcastle disclaims his ambassador and everybody laughs." With elfish delight, he writes later, after Lyttelton had come to him to complain of Pitt's conduct after the incident, "think how I pricked up my ears, as high as King Midas, to hear a Lyttelton vent his grievance against a Pitt and the Grenvilles!"<sup>1</sup> Walpole, however, did justice to Lyttelton when he wrote, some time later, that "Pitt and Temple resented Lyttelton's negotiating for them, though it is certain he had used all his endeavours to serve them; but as they meant to have the sole power of serving—not to be served—they treated him as ill as if he had sold them."

Early in 1756, in accordance with his plan, Pitt, though still retaining his post in the Ministry, began his attack against his own chief on the question of the European treaties and foreign relations. Newcastle found himself harassed and hemmed in on every side. He could not satisfy Pitt, though he made offers to him; so he turned to Fox, and the latter willingly gave his help, on being promoted to the

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1. Horace Walpole's Letters, Toynbee, Vol. 3, pp. 271-72. Also Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George II, Vol. I, pp. 414-416.

Secretaryship of State. In August, Legge refused to sign the Hessian and Russian treaties, and began to act in concert with Pitt. Matters came to a head in November, when Parliament opened, and the great debate on the Address to the King took place. The fight centred round the treaties and lasted till the early hours of the next morning. Fox, Murray and Lyttelton<sup>1</sup> spoke on the Government side, so did W. G. Hamilton, who made his famous 'single' speech on that day. Horace Walpole wrote, "There was a young Mr. Hamilton, who spoke for the first time, and was at once perfection."<sup>2</sup> Pitt, Legge and Grenville, though still in the Ministry, spoke with great force and vehemence against the Government. About Pitt's speech, Horace Walpole wrote to Conway, "There was more humour, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldness, in short, more astounding perfections, than you, even you, who are used to him, can conceive," and to Bentley, "Pitt surpassed himself and then I need not tell you that he surpassed Cicero and Demosthenes."<sup>3</sup> In spite of the opposition, however, the Government won the day with a huge majority, and Newcastle was reassured. He grew bold to dismiss the rebels in the Ministry, and the next week, Pitt, Legge and Grenville were discharged from their duties.

Lyttelton was appointed to succeed Legge as Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was a well-known

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1. In the autumn of 1755, Lyttelton was returned to Parliament in a bye-election at Bewdley as he had lost his own borough at Okenhampton.

2. Letter of November 15th, 1755 to Conway. Toynbee. Vol. 3, p. 367.

3. Letter of November 16th, 1755. Toynbee. Vol. 3, p. 369.

fact that Lyttelton was not strong at figures or particularly adept in the complex problems of national finance. His appointment therefore drew forth many gibes and mocking descriptions.<sup>1</sup> Walpole with his gift for graphic narration, and the usual exaggeration, wrote, "They turned an absent poet to the management of the Revenue, and employed a man as visionary as Don Quixote to combat Demosthenes."<sup>2</sup> His comment on the choice of Lyttelton is very interesting. "Had they dragged Dr. Halley from his observatory, or Dr. Hales from his ventilators, to act as Bayes in the Rehearsal, the choice would have been as judicious." Chambers, the county historian, relates a story which is probably true. "Bishop Warburton on meeting Lyttelton on the road going to pay his respects to Mr. Legge, who was in the

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1. "The Converts: A familiar Ode addressed to Sir G — L — Chan — of the Ex — — r," 1756, London, runs as follows:

"Sir G — put off that strange Disguise,  
What with your peruke's monstrous size,  
Your Gown and Band and Purse,  
I scarcely knew you; in your dress,  
In credit too, perhaps not less,  
You're altered for the worse.

. . . . .  
The former issue of your brain,  
Songs, Eclogues, Odes, a hopeful train,  
Smiled lovely at their Birth.

. . . . .  
Hadst thou not better, still have played  
With Hagley Muses in the Shade?

. . . . .  
Your talents, not in Figures lies,  
Leave Estimates, Accounts, Supplies,  
Not worthy your regarding,  
To Wiser Heads . . . . . etc.

2. *Memoirs of the Reign of George II*, 1845, Vol. 2, p. 63.

country, on his resignation, with Mr. Pitt, the Bishop said: "Party, like distress, obliges men to make strange acquaintances. Here's Sir George Lyttelton going to pay his respects to Mr. Legge; Mr. Legge knows only that two and two make four, and that is just what Sir George don't (sic) know."<sup>1</sup>

In the eyes of Pitt, the elevation of Lyttelton to the Chancellorship of the Exchequer was an unpardonable crime and the thorough betrayal of the 'Cousinhood.'<sup>2</sup> Lyttelton had parted company from them owing to their own fault and the unscrupulous plan they had adopted during the session. The acceptance of the post was a logical sequence of the differences between them, and he considered that he had done his duty. To Conway, he wrote, expecting Pitt's fierce wrath: "The storm rises high and beats fiercely upon me, but God forbid that I should run into any harbour while my friends think I can do them and my country any service by being at sea."<sup>3</sup> To a 'common friend' Lyttelton wrote later, 'on the occasion of my political quarrel with Mr. Pitt and Lord Temple and his family in the year 1755,' "I accepted a high office in the new settlement (after Pelham's death) . . . . I was not single . . . . I took it in conjunction with my friends and relations; I took it at their express desire. The only distinction between them and me is, that I have adhered to it, not seeing any cause to depart from my engagements: if they think they saw proper cause for

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1. J. Chambers: 'Biographical Illustrations of Worcestershire.' 1820, p. 405.

2. The appointment of Lyttelton as Chancellor of the Exchequer "was resented with the greatest acrimony by the whole cousinhood"—Lord Waldegrave—Memoirs, p. 58.

3. Phillimore, p. 494.

altering theirs, I let them judge for themselves, and should not have thought it necessary or expedient or becoming to break off our private friendship on that account, if they had not chosen to do it, very unwisely, I think. You know, Sir, how much I was their friend—a friend who on all occasions has ever set their interests above his own—I was their friend, but not their retainer. I was not their bond-slave. I was not obliged to follow wherever they led, against my own conscience, against what I thought, and still continue to think my honour and duty required. That would not be friendship; it would be servility and baseness of mind. Every generous spirit must loathe and disdain it. . . . A parasite or a sycophant, to make his court for a faction which appears very powerful, may abuse me for this, and call it (if he pleases) *deserting friends* but no worthy man will think the worse of me for it, I dare be confident, and therefore willingly trust my cause to your judgment.”<sup>1</sup> The letter was very probably written to General Conway, and is a spirited defence of his career against the accusation of Pitt, who had finally severed the long friendship between them.

Lyttelton presented his first and only budget on January 23, 1756. “Our friend Sir George Lyttelton,” Horace Walpole wrote to Conway, “opened the Budget; well enough in general, but was strangely bewildered in the figures; he stumbled over millions, and dwelt pompously upon farthings.”<sup>2</sup> In his ‘Memoirs of George II’ he says further: “The matter he unfolded well, but was strangely awkward and absent in reading the figures and

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1. Phillimore: *Memoirs of Lyttelton*, pp. 489-91.

2. Walpole's *Letters*: Toynbee, Vol. 3, p. 389.

distinguishing the same. Pitt ridiculed and beset him, yet he made a good reply and told Pitt that truth was a better answer than eloquence; and having called him *his friend*, and correcting himself to say *the gentleman* and the House laughing, Sir George said: 'If he is not my friend, it is not *my* fault.'

Walpole's letter of the fourth of March of the same year to Conway shows us that, with the exception of Legge, the rest of the members were as ignorant of taxes, supplies, and duties as Lyttelton. "I have never heard so complete a scene of ignorance as yesterday on the new duties! Except Legge, you would not have thought there was a man in the House that had learned Troy weight. Murray quibbled—Pitt and Fox were lamentable; poor Sir George (Lyttelton) never knew prices from duties, nor drawbacks from premiums!"<sup>1</sup>

Another fierce altercation took place between Pitt and Lyttelton on the 12th of May when the latter moved a vote of credit for a million pounds. Walpole describes it in full in his "Memoirs of the Reign of George II"; the quarrel left Lyttelton greatly pained by Pitt's personal attacks, though he rose equal to the occasion in his reply. This was the last personal dispute between the two. Lyttelton always bore himself well, with dignity and courage. In a letter to William, his brother, Governor of Jamaica,<sup>2</sup> Lyttelton wrote that the Duke of Newcastle

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1. Toynbee. Letters: Vol. 3, p. 403.

2. From 1756 to 1759, Lyttelton wrote a number of letters to his brother William, Governor of Jamaica, dealing with the political situation and the important happenings at Court. This correspondence and Walpole's 'Memoirs of the Reign of George II' provide useful material for the politics of the period.

had reported to the King that " Sir George Lyttelton answered Mr. Pitt's arguments and repelled his abuse, with the judgment of a Minister, the force and wit of an orator, and the spirit of a gentleman." Further, " You will believe me when I say that I felt more pain in the contest than pleasure in the success, and always shall avoid having any with him as far as I can, but if I were struck by a Hercules, I would strike again."<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, the failure of Newcastle's foreign policy and of the naval expedition to America was upsetting the stability of the Ministry. The country was in such a state that it wanted a man of genius at its helm to gain success for it in the foreign wars. Pitt was the only man who had the brains to set things right. Newcastle tried to hold on, but very soon he found his supporters crumbling behind him, and his policy wholly unpopular. Pitt's attacks grew more and more furious; they were well timed and justified. Newcastle saw no hope and resigned on October 26th, 1756. Lyttelton lost his office, but as a mark of the King's pleasure, and as a reward for his services, was created Baron Lyttelton of Frankley, on 18th November, 1756.<sup>2</sup> A fortnight later, he took his seat in the House of Lords<sup>3</sup> and spoke for the first time on the ' Militia Bill.' During the trial of Admiral Byng for the disaster of Minorca, Lord Lyttelton took an active interest in the cause of

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1. Phillimore: p. 525.

2. One of Lyttelton's first acts, after being made a peer, was to appoint Joseph Warton, the poet and critic, as his chaplain. See Nichols: *Anecdotes*, Vol. 6, p. 169, and Wooll's *Memoirs of J. Warton*, 1806, p. 242.

3. *Journal of the House of Lords*, Vol. 29, p. 6.



the unfortunate man and tried, along with Pitt, to save him from his fate, but his efforts were unsuccessful.

The next Government was a coalition of Pitt, Newcastle, and Fox. Lyttelton did not try for any place, neither was he offered one. He made good speeches during the debate on the Prussian Treaty, and on the Bill for the extension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1758. On both these occasions, Lord Temple<sup>1</sup> made violent attacks on Lyttelton, but the latter defended himself with ease and came out victor in the quarrel. "Lord Lyttelton," says Walpole,<sup>2</sup> "explained himself handsomely, saying he was sorry . . . if he had given offence, he had meant less offence to Lord Temple than to anybody; he revered the manes of their former friendship; he hoped the ashes were not extinguished past return. To all this Lord Temple said nothing. . . . Lord Temple sullenly endeavoured to avoid it. . . . Lord Lyttelton was known to want no spirit; Lord Temple had been miserably deficient." His speeches during the Prussian treaty debate and his reply to Lord Temple's 'rude but silly answer' "were received," writes Lyttelton to his brother, "with greater applause than any I ever made in my life."<sup>3</sup>

Thus, during the decade after 1750, Lyttelton rose to one of the highest places in the Ministry, the Chancellorship of the Exchequer (a post for which

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1. Lord Temple (1711-1779) was Lyttelton's cousin, Richard Grenville (Temple) and brother of George Grenville. His mother and Lyttelton's were Hester and Christian, daughters of Sir Richard Temple.

2. *Memoirs of the Reign of George II*, Vol. 3, p. 119. See also *Journal of the House of Lords*, Vol. 29, p. 347.

3. Phillimore: pp. 609-610.

he was but ill fitted), lost the office within a year and gained, in recompense, a peerage, to pass the rest of his days in comparative peace in the House of Lords. The story of Smollett's animosity towards Lyttelton and of Johnson's dislike as well, both roused during the same period, is more interesting to relate.

We have seen how Lyttelton had been always on good terms with Fielding; his experience of Smollett, the other great contemporary novelist, however, was a very unhappy one. In 1751, Lyttelton became the object of a fierce but covert attack in 'Peregrine Pickle,' Smollett's second novel, a work in which were also attacked Fielding, Garrick, Rich and Akenside. Horace Walpole describes the origin of the trouble between the two as follows: "Smollett wrote a tragedy and sent it to Lord Lyttelton, with whom he was not acquainted. Lord Lyttelton not caring to point out its defects, civilly advised him to try comedy. He wrote one and solicited the same lord to recommend it to the stage. The latter excused himself; but promised, if it should be acted, to do all the service in his power for the author. Smollett's return was drawing an abusive portrait of Lord Lyttelton in "Roderick Random," a novel, of which sort he published three."<sup>1</sup> In the words of Seccombe, "Months elapsed before Lyttelton, with vague politeness, deprecated the honour of sponsoring the play, which was indeed, exceptionally bad. Smollett retorted at once by 'discarding the patron,' thus exhibiting early the 'systema nervosum maxime

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1. H. Walpole: *Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, 1845. Vol. 3, p. 259.

irritable.' of which he complained in later life to a French physician."<sup>1</sup> Smollett's tragedy was the 'Regicide.' Walpole's statement is true in substance, but he is incorrect when he says that Lyttelton was attacked in 'Roderick Random,' where he was long supposed to be represented by the character of the 'Earl of Sheerwit.'

From the days of Scott, who first made the identification,<sup>2</sup> it has always been believed that 'Earl Sheerwit' in Melopoy'n's story in 'Roderick Random' is Lyttelton. Recently, however, it has been proved that Sheerwit is not Lyttelton, but Chesterfield.<sup>3</sup> Melopoy'n, Marmozet, Supple, Brayer, Vandal and Bellowar in the story are respectively Smollett, Garrick, Lacy, Fleetwood, Rich and Quin. Lord Rattle is meant for 'a composite of all patrons.' Dr. Buck shows how Sheerwit is meant for Chesterfield:

"In the story, Sheerwit secures Melopoy'n an introduction to Marmozet (Garrick)—'and the conversation turning upon my performance, I was not a little surprised, as well as pleased, to hear that Earl Sheerwit had spoken very much in its praise, and even sent Mr. Marmozet the copy.' A letter from Garrick to John Hoadley, dated September 14, 1746, contains the following: 'I have a play with me, sent to me by my Lord Chesterfield, and wrote by one Smollett. It is a Scotch story, but it won't do, etc.' Melopoy'n says Sheerwit is known as a "Maecenas." The name and the title of Earl

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1. The D. N. B.—Article on Smollett.

2. Lives of the Novelists—Sir W. Scott, Life of Smollett. Chandos Classics, 1887.

3. H. S. Buck: 'A Study in Smollett,' 1925.

Sheerwit obviously fit the Earl of Chesterfield, while neither the one nor the other fits Lyttelton, who did not become even Baron Lyttelton till 1756."

Lyttelton had nothing to do with Smollett till early in 1748, and he is not mentioned or attacked in either the preface to 'The Regicide' or 'Roderick Random.' Accepting Walpole's account (quoted before), as substantially true, Smollett must have approached Lyttelton with the 'Regicide' *after* its publication, and it must have been declined by him about January 1748. The 'Comedy' which Lyttelton advised Smollett to write and send to him, was "Charles XII the King of Sweden, or the Adventures of Roderick Random and his man Strap, 1748," mentioned as an anonymous play in William Chetwood's 'The British Theatre,' 1750. The play never materialized, but was perhaps just a preliminary announcement made by Smollett. 'The degree of later fury at Lyttelton shows clearly enough that some considerable rumpus must have been kicked up over Roderick and the King of Sweden.'

The more powerful reason for Smollett's enmity towards Lyttelton, was the latter's continual patronage of Fielding, a hateful rival at the time to Smollett, both as a playwright and a novelist. Lyttelton's other protégés and friends, Akenside, Garrick and Quin, were no less disagreeable persons to Smollett. Quin had obtained royal patronage about this time through Lyttelton. He was later satirized under the name 'Aesopus' in 'Peregrine Pickle,' a name that Thomson had given him in the 'Castle of Indolence.' Quin had also read Lyttelton's prologue to Thomson's 'Coriolanus,' when it was first produced in January 1749. More-

over, Smollett must have remembered how Thomson's 'Tancred and Sigismunda' had been given priority over the 'Regicide' by Lacy in 1745. Garrick had made false promises to Smollett and left him in the lurch. Hatred for Akenside brought him out as the 'Physician' in 'Peregrine Pickle.'

Fielding was, however, particularly detestable to Smollett. Garrick produced his plays annually, while the 'Regicide' had never a single chance and was turned down by everyone. Smollett believed, too, wrongly but with some justification perhaps, that his 'Strap' had been plagiarized by Fielding in the latter's 'Partridge.' Again, when 'Roderick Random' was first published, it was ascribed by many to Fielding, which must have enraged Smollett, who had gone through what he considered enough of humiliation. All these circumstances must have driven him in their cumulative effect to exasperation, and in his blind rage he violently attacked both Fielding and his patron (to whom 'Tom Jones' had just been dedicated) in his next novel, 'Peregrine Pickle.' The 'College of Writers' in that novel thus contained, in the first edition, a most outrageous though successful parody of Lyttelton's 'Monody,' and a virulent diatribe against the 'Universal Patron, Gosling Scrag,' in other words Lyttelton, as can be easily recognised. The chairman expressly says that the 'burlesque ode' was imitated, if not copied, from 'the celebrated production of the Universal Patron.' A comparison of the two poems bears this out fully. Thus Lyttelton's lines:

Where were ye, Muses, when relentless Fate  
From these fond arms your fair disciple tore;  
 . . . . . (St. 7)

and:

For my distracted mind  
 What succours shall I find? (St. 17)  
 were brutally parodied by Smollett as:  
 "Where wast thou, Wittol Ward, when  
 hapless fate  
 From these weak arms mine aged grannam  
 tore!

These pious arms essayed too late,  
 To drive the dismal phantom from the door.  
 Could not thy healing drop, illustrious quack,  
 Could not thy salutary pill prolong her days,  
 For whom, so soft, to Marylebone, alack!  
 Thy sorrels dragg'd thee thro' the worst ways?

\* \* \* \*

For my distracted mind,  
 What comfort shall I find?  
 O best of grannams, thou art dead and gone,  
 And I am left behind to weep and moan,  
 To sing thy dirge in funereal lay,  
 Ah! woe is me!  
 Alack! and well-a-day!"

(*'A pastoral upon the death of  
 the Poet's grandmother.'*)

The criticism of the burlesque ode is meant, of course, to apply to the 'Monody.' "I must in general observe that the stanzas are so irregular in point of measure, . . . that they cannot be comprehended under any species of ancient versification. Then there are many dark allusions in the *Antistrophe*, which no reader can possibly understand, together with a catalogue of places, for which the author seems to have rambled strangely from his subject, more

studious in making a silly parade of his knowledge in poetical geography, than of interesting the passions of the heart. Indeed, one would be apt to conclude from this circumstance, that his grief was mere affectation, did he not blubber so piteously in the last verse."

Lyttelton is described as the famous Gosling Scrag, Esq., who seats himself in the chair of judgment and gives sentence on the authors of the age: "I should be glad to know upon what pretensions to genius this predominance is founded. Do a few flimsy odes, barren epistles, pointless epigrams, entitle him to that eminent rank he maintains in the world of letters? Or did he acquire the reputation of a wit by a repetition of trite invectives against a minister, conveyed in a theatrical cadence, accompanied with the most ridiculous gestures, before he believed it was his interest to desert his master, and renounce his party? For my part, I never saw him open his mouth in public, I never heard him in private conversation, without recollecting and applying these two lines of Pope's "Dunciad,"

'Dulness, delighted, eyed the lively dunce,  
Remembering she herself was pertness once.'

'Yet this antique piece of futility will decide dogmatically upon the merits of every new work; and if the author has not previously scratched himself into his favour, will pronounce upon it, with all the insolence and contempt of supercilious presumption.'<sup>1</sup>

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1. *Peregrine Pickle*, 1751, iv, p. 111 (College of Authors). Further: "Let a scribbler creep into his notice by the most abject veneration, . . . receive and read his amendment with pretended ecstasy, . . . bawl for him upon all occasions in common conversations, prose and rhyme, . . ."

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Nor is the levity of his head less provoking than his arrogance and self-conceit. . . ."

The attack on Fielding is made in the passage where a young author is told that the best way to a good living could be made by feeding Gosling Scrag with flattery.

"I advise Mr. Spondy to give him the refusal of this same pastoral; who knows but that he may have the good fortune to be enlisted in the number of the beef-eaters, in which case, he may, in process of time, be provided for in the Customs or the Church; when he is inclined to marry his cook-wench, his gracious patron may condescend to give the bride away; and may finally settle him, in his old age, as a trading Westminster Justice."

The allusion here to Lyttelton's presence at Fielding's second marriage and his efforts at securing the novelist the 'beef-eater's' place, is obvious, and needs no deep examination. This mean attack on Lyttelton, Fielding and others, was noticed by everyone, including, besides Walpole, Gray and Shenstone. Gray writes to Walpole:

"In the last volume is a character of Mr. Lyttelton under the name of Gosling Scrag, and a parody of part of his 'Monody' under the notion of a pastoral on the death of his grandmother."<sup>1</sup>

Shenstone is moved to deep indignation against such violent spleen and scurrilous attacks:

"There was something accountable enough to

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feed him with the soft nap of dedication, . . . . the friendship of Mr. Scrag will be sooner or later manifested in some warm sinecure."

1. Correspondence of Gray, Walpole, West and Ashton — Toynbee, Vol. 2, p. 109.

me in their burlesquing Mr. Lyttelton's 'Monody.' He is, as you know, engaged in a party, and his poem (though an extraordinarily fine composition) was too tender for the public ear. It should have been printed privately, and a number of copies dispersed only among his friends and acquaintances, but even so, it would have been republished; and it was too good to suppress. I wish the burlesquers of such ungenerous profession should be punished, consistent with English Liberty."<sup>1</sup>

The following year, in 1752, Lyttelton and Fielding were again violently attacked in a pamphlet in which they were respectively introduced as Scrag and Hilding. It was styled,

"A faithful Narrative of the Base and Inhuman Arts that were lately practised upon the brain of Habakkuk Hilding, Justice, Dealer and Chapman, Who now lies in his house in Covent Garden, in a deplorable state of Lunacy, etc. . . . by Draw-cansir Alexander, etc." It was written in the coarsest style, and indulged in the worst personal abuse.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Melville writes, "It reads like malice run mad. It is almost incredible that Smollett wrote it, yet apparently it did come from his pen."<sup>3</sup>

1. Shenstone's Works, Dodsley, 1791, Vol. 3, p. 184.

2. The story in brief is that Habakkuk Hilding (Fielding) is driven to madness by a visit from, among others, 'a long, lean, lank, misshapen spectre' known as Sir Gosling Scrag (Lyttelton). Hilding is asked by Scrag to help him by writing against Peregrine Pickle, but the former protests that he has had enough, and is tired of being 'hooted at, beat and battered' as Scrag's 'Zany or Jack-pudding'—Smollett ascribes Hilding's madness to Scrag's 'perfidious arts and infernal snares.'

3. The Life and Letters of T. Smollett—Melville (Lewis), 1926, p. 74.

This active and ill-reasoned hatred of Fielding and his patron Lyttelton did not, however, last long. Smollett thought better of his grossly unjust attacks on them, and in the second edition of 'Peregrine Pickle,' 1758, the offending passages were removed. Moreover, in the 'Advertisement' to the novel, he tendered his apology:

"He (the author) owned with contrition, that in two instances, he gave way too much to the suggestions of personal resentment, and represented characters as they appeared to him at that time, through the exaggerating medium of prejudice. But he has, in this impression, endeavoured to make atonement for these extravagances."

Fielding was dead, and there being no more rivalry, the self-induced feeling that he had nothing but injustice from the world vanished. Smollett continued to give proof of the reconciliation. Lyttelton's 'Dialogues of the Dead' was very promptly noticed, and favourably too, in Smollett's 'Critical Review' for May, 1760, when the book was published that year. "The hand of a master is too visible in every page to escape the most undiscerning. A distinguishing judgment, delicacy of sentiment, propriety of thought, and purity of diction, recommend this little performance at first glance . . . . entertainment and real instruction . . . . sound sense and a lively imagination, etc."

Four years later, Smollett made another gesture of peace in his 'History of England.' In the chapter on 'the Arts during the reign of George II,' he wrote:

"Candidates for literary fame appeared in the higher spheres of life, embellished by the nervous style, and extensive erudition of a Corke, by the

delicate taste, the polished muse and the tender feelings of a Lyttelton."<sup>1</sup>

The statement made by Arthur Murphy<sup>2</sup> that Lyttelton delayed the publication of his 'History of the Reign of Henry II' till 1767, owing to the fear of Smollett's hostility, is disproved by the fact that both were reconciled in 1758, when the attack on Lyttelton was cut out from the second edition of 'Peregrine Pickle,' and that Lyttelton's 'History' was incomplete even in 1767.

From Smollett's unnatural and violent resentment, we turn to the antipathy of Johnson. It is evident from the biography of Lyttelton, which Johnson wrote, that he was not very favourably disposed towards Lyttelton. It was well known at the time that the great Doctor bore him a dislike for various reasons, and he did not relish the task of writing the 'Life of Lyttelton,' for, as Mrs. Piozzi wrote, 'he neither loved nor esteemed the man.'<sup>3</sup> On July 27th, 1780, Johnson wrote to Lyttelton's brother, Lord Westcote, about this 'Life':

"My desire is to avoid offence, and to be totally out of danger. I take the liberty of proposing to your lordship, that the historical account should be

1. What Smollett had written to Garrick, when he made peace with the actor in 1757, may as well have been written by him to Lyttelton. "He thought it a duty incumbent upon him to make a public atonement in a *work of truth*, for the wrongs done him in a *work of fiction*." A. Murphy: *Life of Garrick*, 1801, Vol. 2, p. 301.

2. 'Mr. Murphy said he understood it was kept back several years for fear of Smollett.' Boswell's 'Johnson,' ed. G. B. Hill, Vol. 3, p. 33.

3. Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi (Thrale), by A. Hayward, 1861, Vol. 1, p. 162.

written under your discretion by any friend you may be willing to employ, and I will only take upon myself to examine the poetry. . . ."

The next day he wrote: "I wish it had been convenient to have had that done which I proposed. I shall certainly not wantonly or willingly offend; but when there are such near relations living, I had rather they would please themselves." A fortnight later, he wrote to Nichols, "I expected to have found a life of Lyttelton prefixed to his Works. Is there not one before the Quarto Edition? I think there is—if not, I am with respect to him, quite aground."

It must be admitted that nowhere is Johnson grossly unfair, but neither does he show much sympathy with his subject, and his critical opinions are coloured by his prejudice. There were reasons, personal and other, for this dislike on Johnson's part.

In the first instance, Lyttelton was a Whig, and Johnson's political views always led him to dislike a Whig. Boswell narrates the following conversation:

'The General (Paoli) observed that Martinelli was a Whig. Johnson: "I am sorry for it. It shows the spirit of the times; he is obliged to temporise." Boswell: "I rather think, Sir, that Toryism prevails in this reign." Johnson: "I know not why you should think so, Sir, you see your friend Lord Lyttelton, a nobleman, is obliged in his

1. Johnson's Letters: Hill, Vol. 2, p. 189.

2. Dr. Johnson: Letters, ed. Hill, Vol. 2, see pp. 188 and 197.

3. To Mrs. Thrale, Dr. Johnson wrote on 1st August, 1781: "I sent to Lord Westcote about his brother's life, but he says he knows not whom to employ, and is sure I shall do him no injury. There is an ingenious scheme to save a day's work, or part of a day, utterly defeated."

*History* to write the most vulgar Whiggism.'” On another occasion, his comment is less severe, but there can be no doubt that he had no sympathy with Lyttelton’s political views. In his interview with George III—“His Majesty then asked him what he thought of Lord Lyttelton’s ‘History’ which was then published. Johnson said he thought his style pretty good, but that he had blamed Henry the Second rather too much. ‘Why, (said the King) they seldom do these things by halves.’ ‘No, Sir,’ (answered Johnson) ‘not to Kings.’”

There was secondly the attachment of Johnson to Miss Boothby. Mrs. Thrale gives the story in full:

“The friend of this lady (Mrs. Fitzherbert) succeeded her in the management of Mr. Fitzherbert’s family, and in the esteem of Dr. Johnson; though he told me she pushed her piety to bigotry, her devotion to enthusiasm; that she somewhat disqualified herself for the duties of *this* life by her perpetual aspirations after the *next*. Such was, however, the purity of her mind, he said, and such the grace of her manner, that Lord Lyttelton and he used to strive for her preference with an emulation that occasioned hourly disgust, and ended in lasting animosity. ‘You may see (said he to me, when the Poets’ Lives were printed), that dear Boothby is at my heart still. She *would* delight in that fellow Lyttelton’s company though, all that I could do; and I cannot forgive even his memory the preference given by a mind like hers.’ I have heard Baretti say, that when this lady died, Dr. Johnson was almost distracted with his

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1. Boswell’s Life of Johnson: April 15th, 1773. Ed. by Hill, Vol. 2, p. 221.

2. *Ibid.* Vol. 2, p. 37, 1767.

grief; and that the friends about him had much ado to calm the violence of his emotion.'"

Miss Hill Boothby, sister of Sir Brooke Boothby, the sixth Baronet, was born on 27th October, 1708, and died on 16th January, 1756. Johnson's acquaintance with this lady began in August or September, 1739, when he was on a visit to Appleby and Bradley in Leicestershire, and during his stay at Mrs. Fitzherbert's at the latter place.<sup>1</sup> This acquaintance soon grew into a close friendship and admiration for Miss Boothby's learning and piety. She is said to have prepared a 'Hebrew grammar for her own use,' and was supposed to be a 'little inclined to the mystic or rather the seraphic theology.' The Doctor kept up a fairly regular correspondence with her,<sup>2</sup> and the letters written between 1753 and 1756 were published in 1805.<sup>4</sup> It is not known how Lyttelton came to know Miss Boothby, but once he met her, there must have been no lack of affinity between the author of the 'Conversion of St. Paul' and the extremely pious lady, who ultimately 'preferred' him to Johnson.

Mrs. Piozzi's account of the rivalry is supported by Mrs. Chapone, the friend of Mrs. Montagu, and a prominent blue-stocking. In a letter to Sir William Pepys, she tells us: "His (Dr. Johnson's) animosity

1. See Piozzi Anecdotes: Johnson Miscellanies, ed. Hill. Vol. 1, p. 257. Also Boswell: Vol. 4, p. 57, ed. Hill, and A. Hayward: Autobiography and Letters of Mrs. Piozzi, 1861, Vol. 1, p. 26. For the letters of Johnson to Miss Boothby, see Johnson: Letters, Vol. 1, p. 45.

2. See Johnson: Letters, ed. Hill, Vol. 1, pp. 3, 45, and Boswell: Life of Johnson, ed. Hill, Vol. 1, pp. 82-83.

3. Johnson: Letters, Vol. 1, p. 64.

4. 'An Account of the Life of Dr. Johnson,' 1805.



against Lord Lyttelton, it seems, was an old grudge of Rivalry for a Lady's favour."<sup>1</sup>

There was another reason why Johnson disliked Lyttelton. In an anonymous book called "Lexiphanes, a Dialogue imitated from Lucian," 1767, Johnson's ponderous style and Latinisms were freely satirized, even to the point of indecency. The author, Archibald Campbell, had dedicated it to Lyttelton, probably with the latter's consent, and though the criticism was 'smart, but exaggerated,'<sup>2</sup> Johnson's anger must have been roused against the patron of the satire.<sup>3</sup>

It is hard to believe that Johnson, who with all his prejudices had little real malice towards anyone, should have nursed and cherished a petty spite for twenty-four years, for Miss Boothby died in 1756. The letter to Lord Westcote amply proves this, for Johnson deliberately wrote: 'I shall certainly not wantonly or willingly offend.' Again, Mrs. Piozzi's anecdotes are not always soberly worded; it is probable there is a good deal of exaggeration and the proverbial grain of salt in her lively account. It is possible, however, that Johnson's dislike to Lyttelton's manners and political views may have been slightly increased by this long-dead rivalry for Miss Boothby's favours. The Rev. John Hussey recorded

1. A. C. Gaussen: 'A Later Pepys,' Vol. I, p. 409.

2. 'A Bibliography of Samuel Johnson'—D. N. Smith and W. P. Courtney, 1925, p. 27.

3. Lyttelton, too, disliked Johnson's diction. "Lord Lyttelton says the word '*writation*,' which Lord Cobham invented for those works which had a certain ostentation of phrase, is most applicable to Johnson." Mrs. Montagu, the 'Queen of Blue-Stockings,' Mrs. Climençon and R. Blunt, 1923, Vol. 2, p. 148.

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4. 'An Account of the Life of Dr. Johnson,' 1805.

against Lord Lyttelton, it seems, was an old grudge of Rivalry for a Lady's favour."<sup>1</sup>

There was another reason why Johnson disliked Lyttelton. In an anonymous book called "*Lexiphanes, a Dialogue imitated from Lucian*," 1767, Johnson's ponderous style and Latinisms were freely satirized, even to the point of indecency. The author, Archibald Campbell, had dedicated it to Lyttelton, probably with the latter's consent, and though the criticism was 'smart, but exaggerated,'<sup>2</sup> Johnson's anger must have been roused against the patron of the satire.<sup>3</sup>

It is hard to believe that Johnson, who with all his prejudices had little real malice towards anyone, should have nursed and cherished a petty spite for twenty-four years, for Miss Boothby died in 1756. The letter to Lord Westcote amply proves this, for Johnson deliberately wrote: 'I shall certainly not wantonly or willingly offend.' Again, Mrs. Piozzi's anecdotes are not always soberly worded; it is probable there is a good deal of exaggeration and the proverbial grain of salt in her lively account. It is possible, however, that Johnson's dislike to Lyttelton's manners and political views may have been slightly increased by this long-dead rivalry for Miss Boothby's favours. The Rev. John Hussey recorded

1. A. C. Gaussen: 'A Later Pepys,' Vol. 1, p. 409.

2. 'A Bibliography of Samuel Johnson'—D. N. Smith and W. P. Courtney, 1925, p. 27.

3. Lyttelton, too, disliked Johnson's diction. "Lord Lyttelton says the word '*writation*,' which Lord Cobham invented for those works which had a certain ostentation of phrase, is most applicable to Johnson." Mrs. Montagu, the 'Queen of Blue-Stockings,' Mrs. Climensson and R. Blunt, 1923, Vol. 2, p. 148.

in a marginal note on Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, "Johnson said to me many years before he published his preface, 'Lord Lyttelton was a worthy, good man, but so ungracious that he did not know how to be a Gentleman!'" The 'Preface' is the 'Life of Lyttelton.'<sup>1</sup>

Johnson gave great offence to the friends and admirers of Lyttelton when he wrote: "When they (the 'Dialogues of the Dead') were first published, they were kindly commended by the Critical Reviewers,<sup>2</sup> and poor Lyttelton, with humble gratitude, returned, in a note, which I have read, acknowledgments which can never be proper, since they must be paid either for flattery or for justice." Boswell himself comments, "I can by no means join in the censure bestowed by Johnson on his Lordship, whom he calls 'poor Lyttelton' for returning thanks to the critical Reviewers for having 'kindly commended' his *Dialogues of the Dead*. 'Such acknowledgments (says my friend) never can be proper, since they must be paid either for flattery or for justice.' In my opinion, the most upright man, who has been tried on a false accusation, may, when he is acquitted, make a bow to his jury. And when those who are so much the arbiters of literary merit, as in a considerable degree to influence the public opinion, review an author's work, *placido lumine*, when I am afraid mankind in general are better pleased with

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1. Johnson: *Lives of the Poets*, ed. Hill, Vol. 3, p. 458.

2. Critical Reviewers—the writers of the Critical Review. Smollett was the editor of the Critical Review. It is interesting to note that Smollett, who had once made a grossly libellous attack on Lyttelton in 1751, says—"The hand of a master is visible in every page." (The Critical Review, May, 1760.) See p. 234, *ante*.

his hostess two or three times after dinner, with a view to engaging her in conversation; receiving only cold and brief answers, he said, in a low voice, to General Paoli, who sat next him, and who told me the story, 'You see, Sir, I am no longer the man for Mrs. Montagu.'"<sup>1</sup>

Another great friend of Lyttelton's deeply wounded by Johnson's remarks and biography in general, was William Pepys (later Sir William Pepys)—also a friend of Mrs. Montagu and the Doctor himself. Mme. D'Arblay's *Diary* gives an account of a furious quarrel that took place between Pepys and Johnson at a dinner given by Mrs. Thrale in her house at Streatham in June, 1781.<sup>2</sup>

Miss Burney writes: "Never before have I seen Dr. Johnson speak with so much passion. 'Mr. Pepys,' he cried, in a voice the most enraged, 'I understand you are offended by my *Life of Lord Lyttelton*. What is it you have to say against it? Come forth, man! Here I am ready to answer any charge you can bring!' I never saw Dr. Johnson really in a passion but then; and dreadful indeed it was to see. I wished myself away a thousand times. It was a frightful scene. He so red, poor Mr. Pepys so pale. It was behaving ill to Mrs. Thrale certainly to quarrel in her house, but he never repeated it; though he wished of all things to have gone through such another scene with Mrs. Montagu; and to refrain was an act of heroic forbearance. She came to Streatham one morning and I saw he was dying to attack her." Mrs. Montagu, it seems, behaved

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1. Johnson: *Miscellanies*, Vol. 2, p. 421.

2. Mme. D'Arblay's *Diary*, and *Letters*, ed. Barrett and Dobson, Vol. 1, p. 497, Vol. 2, pp. 235-37.

'very stately.' "She turned from him very stiffly, and with a most distant air, and without even curtsying to him, and with a firm intention to keep to what she had publicly declared—that she would never speak to him more. However, he went up to her himself, longing to begin, and very roughly said: 'Well, madam, what's become of your new fine house? I hear no more of it.'" "She was obliged to answer him; and she soon grew so frightened—as everybody does—that she was as civil as ever." Peace was at last restored between the two, but after a great deal of coolness, indifference and unexpressed hostility on either side.<sup>1</sup>

Pepys himself gave an account of the quarrel in a letter to Mrs. Montagu written nearly two months later.<sup>2</sup> "I met Johnson some time ago at Streatham, and such a day did we pass in disputation upon the 'Life' of our dear friend, Lord Lyttelton, as I trust it will never be my fate to pass again. The moment the cloth was removed, he challenged me to *come out*, (as he called it). . . . This, you see, was a call which, however disagreeable to myself and the rest of the company, I could not but obey, and so *to it we went* for three or four hours without ceasing. He once observed, that it was the duty of a biographer to state *all* the failings of a respectable character. . . . He took great credit for not having mentioned the *coarseness of Lord Lyttelton's manners*. We shook hands, however, at parting. . . . We

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1. Horace Walpole suggests that Mrs. Montagu in revenge instigated the Rev. R. Potter to write his 'Enquiry into some passages in Dr. Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets,' 1783. Toynbee. Letters of Walpole. Vol. 13, p. 5. It was a civil, but severe criticism of Johnson.

2. Johnson: *Miscellanies*, Vol. 2, p. 417.



have not met again till last Tuesday, and then I must do him the justice to say that he did all in his power to show me that he was sorry for his former attack. But what hurts me all this while is, not that Johnson should go unpunished, but that our dear and respectable friend should . . . be handed down to succeeding generations under the appellation of 'poor Lyttelton.' " Mrs. Piozzi tells us how much Johnson himself felt over the matter, after the dispute had ended. "The moment he (Mr. Pepys) was gone, 'Now (says Dr. Johnson) is Pepys gone home hating me, who love him better than I did before; he spoke in defence of his dead friend, but though I hope *I* spoke better who spoke against him, yet all my eloquence will gain me nothing but an honest man for an enemy.' " However, as Pepys's letter shows, the two were reconciled in a few weeks, and became as good friends as ever.

Johnson had no high opinion of Lyttelton's 'Dialogues of the Dead.' He is reported to have said to his friend, Dr. Maxwell, ". . . That man sat down to write a book, to tell the world what the world had all his life been telling him." <sup>2</sup> It is hard

1. Piozzi's Anecdotes: Johnson: Miscellanies, Vol. 1 p. 244. See also A. C. Gaussen's 'A Later Pepys,' Vol. 1, Chap. VI. Hannah More writes in her Memoirs (Johnson. Miscellanies. Vol. 1, p. 206). "He has just finished the Poets; Pope is the last, I am sorry he has lost so much credit by Lord Lyttelton's; he treats him almost with contempt; makes him out a poor writer, and an envious man; speaks well only of his 'Conversion of St. Paul,' of which he says, 'it is sufficient to say it has never been answered.' Mrs. Montagu and Mr. Pepys, his two chief surviving friends, are very angry." —1781.

2. Dr. Maxwell's 'Collectanea,' quoted by Boswell in his 'Life of Johnson,' ed. Hill, Vol. 2, p. 126.

to understand what Johnson exactly meant to convey in the words given above, except perhaps a vague disapproval of the book. 'To reflect the world's opinion' is no reproach for a creative artist, for it is one of his normal functions in literature.

If Lyttelton was more or less an aversion to Johnson, his brother William Lyttelton, Governor of Jamaica for some time, and later, Lord Westcote, (Johnson gave him the nickname 'Lord Parenthesis') was a good friend, whose company did not displease the Doctor. In 1771, he invited Johnson to his home, 'Little Hagley,' but Johnson could not go. "I would have been glad to go to Hagley, in compliance with Mr. Lyttelton's kind invitation, for beside the pleasure of his conversation, I should have had the opportunity of recollecting past times, and wanderings *per montes notos et flumina nota*, of recalling the images of sixteen, and reviewing my conversation with poor Ford. But this year will not bring the gratification within my power. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

In the middle of September, three years later, Johnson visited Hagley on his journey to North Wales. Lord Lyttelton had died the previous year, and had been succeeded by his son Thomas. The visit was, of course, to "Little Hagley," though the party, for there was Mrs. Thrale with the Doctor, visited Hagley Hall too. Johnson was very much dissatisfied with his reception at William Lyttelton's. "We went to Hagley where we were disappointed of the respect and kindness we expected . . . . we saw the house and park, which equalled my

1. Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi, ed. A. Hayward, 1861. Vol. 1, p. 162.

2. Johnson's Letters, ed. Hill: Vol. 1, p. 177. See pp. 16, 17, *ante*.

expectation. The house is one square mass. The offices are below. The rooms of elegance on the first floor, with two stories of bedchambers, very well disposed above it. The bedchambers have low windows, which abates the dignity of the house. The park has one artificial ruin, and wants water; there is, however, one temporary cascade. From the farthest hill, there is a very wide prospect. . . . We made haste away from a place, where all were offended."<sup>1</sup> Where exactly Johnson's susceptibilities were wounded, can be seen in Mrs. Thrale's 'Journal of the Tour.'

"18th September, 1774. We dressed and dined at Hagley. . . . The ladies pressed me to play at cards, notwithstanding all my excuses, with an ill-bred, but irresistible, importunity. . . . Mr. Johnson sat to read a while and then walked about, when Mr. Lyttelton advertised, if he did not use his candle to put it out."<sup>2</sup> And the host actually took away Johnson's candle that he wanted to read by.

The 'respectable Hottentot' in Chesterfield's 'Letters to his Son' was for a long time taken to be meant for Johnson, owing to the notoriety of the letter to Chesterfield written by Johnson and the belief that the two were on very bad terms with each other. Dr. Birkbeck Hill has conclusively proved that the picture of the 'Hottentot' was *not* drawn from Johnson. The letter, in which the 'respectable

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1. Boswell: Life of Johnson, ed. Hill, Vol. 5, pp. 456-57 and foot-notes.

2. 'Mrs. Thrale's Journal of the Tour in Wales with Dr. Johnson.' "Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale."—A. M. Broadley, p. 158.

Hottentot' appears, was written three years after Johnson had waited for the last time in Chesterfield's 'outward rooms.' Moreover, there had been very little intimacy between the two, and Chesterfield had never seen Johnson eat. The description itself runs thus:

"There is a man, whose moral character, deep learning and superior parts I acknowledge, admire and respect; but whom it is impossible for me to love, that I am almost in a fever whenever I am in his company. He throws anywhere but down his throat, whatever he means to drink; and only mangles what he means to carve. . . . He disputes with heat and indiscriminately. Is it possible to love such a man? No. The utmost I can do for him, is to consider him a respectable Hottentot."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Birkbeck Hill points out that in two previous letters (117 and 109) Chesterfield had distinctly mentioned Lyttelton, as 'L,' and quoted him as a peculiarly awkward person and a warning to all young men aspiring after social distinction.<sup>2</sup> He then proceeds to suggest that Lyttelton must have been the man obviously meant in the third letter, designated as the 'respectable Hottentot.' It may, of course, be asked, why Chesterfield did not mention him as 'L', if he had really meant Lyttelton, in the third letter, as he had thought fit to do in the other two. It is therefore hard to affirm that Lyttelton was the 'Hottentot,' as Dr. Hill tries to

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1. Letter No. 160, February 28th, 1752. Chesterfield's Letters, ed. J. Bradshaw, 1892, Vol. 1, pp. 407-408.

2. Boswell, Vol. 1, p. 267. Also Dr. Johnson: His Friends and his Critics. Dr. Hill.

prove.<sup>1</sup> Boswell has very interesting remarks to offer on the point.

“The character of a ‘respectable Hottentot’ in Lord Chesterfield’s Letters has been generally understood to be meant for Johnson, and I have no doubt it was. But I remember when the *Literary Property* of those letters was contested in the Court of Sessions in Scotland, and Mr. Henry Dundas, as one of the counsels for the proprietors, read this character as an exhibition of Johnson, Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, one of the Judges, maintained with some warmth, that it was not intended as a portrait of Johnson, but of a late noble lord distinguished for abstruse science. I have heard Johnson himself talk of the character and say that it was meant for George, Lord Lyttelton, in which I could by no means agree; for his lordship had nothing of that violence which is a conspicuous feature in the composition. Finding that my illustrious friend could bear to have it supposed that it might be meant for him, I said laughingly, that there was one trait which unquestionably did not belong to him, ‘he throws his meat anywhere but down his throat.’ ‘Sir, (said he) Lord Chesterfield never saw me eat in his life.’ ”<sup>2</sup>

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1. Lyttelton and Lord Chesterfield were intimate friends between the years 1737 and 1742. Their friendship declined thereafter, and Chesterfield could not have had Lyttelton in mind, as he wrote the famous letter about the respectable Hottentot in 1752, nearly ten years after their active friendship. Phillimore writes about a letter from Chesterfield, dated June 9th, 1742.

“This is the last of Lord Chesterfield’s letters preserved at Hagley. His intimacy with Lyttelton appears to have been gradually discontinued after the marriage.”

Lyttelton was married in June, 1742.

2. Boswell: *Life of Johnson*, ed. Hill, Vol. 1, pp. 266-67.

'The late noble lord distinguished for abstruse science' may have been, Dr. Hill suggests, George, second Earl of Macclesfield, who was in 1752 elected President of the Royal Society.<sup>1</sup>

Boswell knew Lyttelton in person, as can be inferred from Johnson's calling him "your friend Lyttelton," as also from the interesting story circulated about the ill-treatment that Johnson received from Chesterfield. Boswell writes:

"Lord Chesterfield, to whom Johnson had paid the compliment of addressing to his Lordship the '*plan*' of his *Dictionary*, had behaved to him in such a manner as to excite his contempt and indignation. The world has been for many years amused with a story confidently told, and as confidently repeated with additional circumstances, that a sudden disgust was taken by Johnson upon occasion of his having been one day kept long in waiting in his Lordship's antechamber, for which the reason assigned was, that he had company with him; and that at last, when the door opened, out walked Colley Cibber; and that Johnson was so violently provoked when he found for whom he had been so long excluded, that he went away in a passion, and never would return. I remember having mentioned this story to George, Lord Lyttelton, who told me he was very intimate with Lord Chesterfield, and holding it as a well-known truth, defended Lord Chesterfield by saying that 'Cibber, who had been

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1. Walpole writes in February, 1753, "We are a charming wise set, all philosophers, botanists, antiquarians, and mathematicians, and adjourned our first meeting, because Lord Macclesfield, our Chairman, was engaged to a party for finding out the longitude." Letters, ed. Toynbee, Vol. 3, p. 142.

introduced familiarly by the back stairs, had probably not been there above ten minutes.' It may seem strange even to entertain a doubt concerning a story so long and so widely current, and thus implicitly adopted, if not sanctioned, by the Authority which I have mentioned; but Johnson himself assured me that there was not the least foundation for it. He told me that there never was any particular incident which produced a quarrel between Lord Chesterfield and him; but that his Lordship's continued neglect was the reason why he resolved to have no connection with him."<sup>1</sup>

There is additional evidence of Lyttelton's acquaintance with Boswell, in a letter from Boswell to Rev. W. J. Temple written in March, 1768: "My book (Account of Corsica and Journal of a Tour to that Island) has amazing celebrity; Lord Lyttelton, Mr. Walpole, Mrs. Macaulay and Mr. Garrick have all written me noble letters about it."<sup>2</sup>

Reverting to Johnson's 'Life of Lyttelton,' it must be admitted that Johnson did not often allow his dislike to conquer his judgment. It is even reported that he "suppressed an anecdote which would have made his memory (Lyttelton's) ridiculous." "Lyttelton was a man rather melancholy in his disposition, and used to declare to his friends, that when he went to Vauxhall, he always supposed pleasure to be in the *next box* to his at least, that he himself was so unhappily situated as always to be in

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1. Boswell's Life of Johnson: Hill, Vol. 1, p. 256.

2. James Boswell. Letters, ed. C. B. Tinker, 1924, Vol. 1, p. 148. See also p. 156.

the wrong box for it."<sup>1</sup> It is a matter of grave doubt, as to how far this anecdote is true, but it is certainly to the credit of Johnson that he resisted the temptation of writing it down in his biography. He is mainly fair to Lyttelton; in his own way perhaps, yet with the best of intentions. He pays great tribute to the moral character and the intellectual attainments of Lyttelton, and says that he had a "mind attentive to life, and a power of poetry which cultivation might have raised to excellence."<sup>2</sup>

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1. The European Magazine (1798), Vol. 34, "Drossi," p. 376. E. Fitzgerald credits this statement to Sir Charles Hanbury Williams—More Letters, p. 157.

2. Lives of the English Poets, ed. G. B. Hill, 1905, Vol. 3, p. 457.



## CHAPTER IX

1750—1760

### MORE FRIENDSHIPS. THE BLUE-STOCKINGS.

#### THE TOUR TO WALES

A year after Edward Moore, fabulist and author of 'The Gamester,' had sought the patronage of Lyttelton through his 'Trial of Selim, the Persian,'<sup>1</sup> the latter came to know the poet in person through Fielding. In August 1749, Lyttelton received a letter from Fielding, requesting him to grant his protection to his needy friend, Moore, and secure for him the post of Deputy Licensor to the stage. The letter runs as follows:

"There is a great pleasure in gratitude, tho' it is second, I believe, to that of benevolence, for of all the delights upon earth, none can equal the raptures which a good mind feels in conferring happiness on those whom we think worthy of it. This is the sweetest ingredient in power, and I solemnly protest I never wished for power more, than a few days ago, for the sake of a man I love, and that more perhaps from the esteem I know he bears you, than from any other reason. This man is in love with a young creature of the most apparent worth, who returns his affections. Nothing is wanting to make two very miserable people extremely blessed, but a moderate portion of the greatest of human evils, so philosophers

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1. Published in 1748.

call it. . . . The name of this man is Moore, to whom you kindly destined that laurel, which, tho' it hath long been withered, may not probably soon drop from the brow of its present possessor; but there is another place of much the same value now vacant; it is that of Deputy Licensor to the stage. Be not offended at this hint; for tho' I will own it impudent enough in one who hath so many obligations of his own to you, to venture to recommend another man to your favour, yet impudence itself may possibly be a virtue when exerted on the behalf of a friend. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton was unable at the time to procure the job for Moore, but when the chance came, he rendered him substantial help in a different direction. Johnson, without knowledge of what Lyttelton did for Moore three or four years later, writes: "Moore courted his favour by an apologetical poem, called the ' Trial of Selim ' for which he was paid with kind words, which, as is common, raised great hopes, that at last were disappointed."<sup>2</sup> This is not correct, for in 1753, through the influence of Lyttelton, Moore was appointed to the editorship of "The World," a weekly journal started that year with the object of satirising the follies and vices of fashionable society. "Lyttelton projected a paper," writes J. Chambers, "in concert with Dodsley, which should unite the talents of certain men of rank, and receive such a tone and consequence from that circumstance as mere scholars can seldom hope to obtain. Such was the origin of "The World," for every paper of which Dodsley stipulated to pay Moore three guineas,

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1. Phillimore: pp. 336-38.

2. Lives of the English Poets, ed. G. B. Hill, 1905, Vol. 3, p. 448.

whether the paper was written by him or the volunteer contributors. Lyttelton, to render this bargain more productive to the editor, collected and obtained the assistance of the Earls of Chesterfield, Bath and Cork; and of Messrs. (Horace) Walpole, Cambridge, etc. . . . . It is also said that when Moore married, Lyttelton did him the honour of standing as father to the bride."<sup>1</sup> The "World" thus became a popular periodical, with an average of two to three thousand subscribers. Moore wrote only sixty-one out of two hundred and ten numbers, but as agreed upon, he got the entire profits. Moore was not always grateful to his patron, in spite of all the trouble Lyttelton took on his behalf. Horace Walpole (who had anonymously published in 1748 the 'Letters to the Whigs' to which Moore had written in reply his 'Trial of Selim') relates merrily how *he* of all persons was employed to "reconcile Sir George and Moore," when the latter had quarrelled with his patron, on Lyttelton's giving Bower the Office of Clerk of the Buck Warrants. "Moore has been very flippant, nay impertinent, on the former's giving a little place to Bower in preference to him—Think of my being the mediator!"<sup>2</sup>

There is an interesting story told by Maty<sup>3</sup> concerning Moore, and the first contribution of Chesterfield's to 'The World,' (Paper 18), sent in anonymously. Moore was about to reject the article

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1. J. Chambers: Biographical Illustrations of Worcester-shire, 1820, p. 399.

2. Letters of H. Walpole: Toynbee, Vol. 3, p. 234, 18th May, 1754.

3. Maty: Works of Chesterfield, 1777, Vol. 1, p. 118 and p. 203. See also J. H. Caskey: Life and Works of Edward Moore, 1927, p. 137.

on account of its length, and the neglect would have ended further contributions from Chesterfield, when fortunately Lyttelton happened to call at Dodsley's and instantly recognised the hand, on the paper being shown to him. Some of the best essays in 'The World' were from Chesterfield, and it would have been a great pity if Moore had lost his support. It is doubtful, however, if the story is true, for Dodsley was well acquainted with the noble Earl's hand, and could not have failed to discover the author.

If Moore was ungrateful to his patron, he was not undeserving of help. In the case of Archibald Bower, the notorious impostor, Lyttelton's benevolence was misplaced, and he was obviously the dupe of his own good nature.

Lyttelton had first known Bower about 1748, and, believing him a worthy object for patronage, had obtained for him the post of the Librarianship of Queen Caroline's Library, then in the gift of Pelham, the Prime Minister. Bower had been first a Roman Catholic priest by profession, and had stayed long in Italy. Later, he left Italy pretending to have been disgusted by Popery, and joined the Church of England. He became a tutor to the children of Lucy Lyttelton's uncle, and thus came to her husband's notice. Lyttelton became a very great friend of Bower's and remained one to the last, even when Bower's sordid doings in Italy had been disclosed to the public by a certain Dr. Douglas. It came out that Bower's reason for leaving Italy had been to escape imprisonment for a nefarious crime he had committed, and that Bower's conversion to the Protestant Church was not genuine, but a pretence.

As soon as Dr. Douglas published his book, Bower's conduct was condemned by society in general, whom he had so thoroughly deceived. Garrick became one of the fierce critics of Bower; the latter in revenge severely attacked the actor in a second edition of his 'History of the Popes.' Garrick's anger was roused by the ways of this impostor, and he proceeded to give him an effective reply, "in a farce or play with Bower's caricature and vices hinted at,"<sup>1</sup> but before he did so, he wrote first to Lyttelton whom he knew to be Bower's friend and patron. Lyttelton remained unaccountably charitable to Bower, in spite of his detection, and wrote back to Garrick, requesting him to 'suppress his intended chastisement of Bower.' Garrick reluctantly gave in to Lyttelton's request, and resigned 'all further thoughts of introducing Bower to the public.' It is hard to imagine what made Lyttelton shield this notorious priest from Garrick. Perhaps he believed in his innocence, along with Dr. Johnson, who wrote that when Bower faced his enemies, they retreated before him.<sup>2</sup>

Garrick had by this time grown into a close friend of Lyttelton. They had spent the summer together twice at Tunbridge Wells, in 1748 and 1752, and met frequently at Mrs. Montagu's house in Hill Street, Mayfair. He was an occasional guest at Hagley, as Lyttelton was at the actor's house in London. Garrick had great respect for Lyttelton as the Bower incident shows; and Lyttelton on his part was a profound admirer of the famous actor. It has been already seen how he was one of the first to acclaim

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1. Life of Garrick: Davies, Vol. 1, pp. 279-83.

2. Lives of the English Poets, ed. G. B. Hill, 1905, Vol. 3, p. 451.

the man. In his 'Dialogues of the Dead,' Lyttelton pays him a great tribute of praise:

"Mr. Garrick has shown the English nation more excellences in Shakespeare, than the quickest wits could discern, and has imprinted them on the heart with a livelier feeling than the most sensible natures had ever experienced without his help." "The variety, spirit and force of Mr. Garrick's action" were beyond description.

Phillimore publishes the only letter from Garrick to Lyttelton, in his 'Memoirs'; it is undated, but must have been written after 1756, as Garrick addressed his friend as 'My very dear Lord.' Mrs. Garrick had the nickname of 'Pid-pad' alluded to in the letter.<sup>1</sup> It was evidently written in great good humour and fancy; it runs as follows:

"The letter I had the honour of receiving from you yesterday, gave me at once the most exquisite pleasure—Your affectionate declaration to me is felt in my heart of hearts, as Shakespeare feelingly calls it. . . . Since I revell'd in delight upon the Hills at Hagley, I have had a drawback with some attacks of my old disorder. . . . I have put my philosophy to trial—I drink no wine, eat but one thing, and don't so much as smell at supper.

That your Lordship has any object for the exercise of your resignation and patience, most truly affects me. If you had not these stops in the course of your life, your change from this world to a better would not have sufficient contrast—to enjoy a good share of health, the good wishes of all good men, and be the praise of all parties, with a circle of friends

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1. See Phillimore: *Memoirs*, pp. 548-551.

whose taste and knowledge and genius, can enjoy yours—these are the blessings few can boast of, and I hope I may morally pray God that you may long enjoy them. . . . Mrs. Vesey is a most agreeable woman, Mrs. Montagu is *herself alone*. Were they eighteen, and I an Adonis of twenty-one, I should love one and adore the other. I would kiss the hand of the Sylph, but fall at the feet of the Minerva. Such are my feelings about them, and if your Lordship can work up a little jealousy out of this declaration I beg you will make the best of it. You deserve a small proportion of mischief at my hands, for raising the vanity of Pid-Pad<sup>1</sup> to such a height, that all my assumed dignity cannot lower. I must not scold, and find fault, but she throws your Lordship at my head—and in short, for I begin to grow angry if you and Pid-Pad grow as fashionable as other folks, I must have satisfaction and to have the most full and complete satisfaction, I shall desire your Lordship to meet me in Hagley Park . . . . Pid-Pad sends her love.”

Garrick’s letter containing this reference to Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Vesey was written in 1757. About this time, the evening assemblies of these ladies

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i. “Pid-Pad” is described in some verses addressed to Garrick by Lyttelton as follows:

“Yet one there is whose gentle sway,  
 Even you with all your faults obey,  
 Whose magic binds in pleasing chains,  
 Your heart, and there triumphant reigns,  
 To whom each sister grace imparts,  
 Her sweetest charms, her finest arts,  
 Oft may she tread this hallowed green,  
 And she shall be the Fairy Queen!”

Mrs. Garrick, before her marriage, had been a celebrated dancer. Phillimore: p. 551.

were just beginning to flourish. It was in the words of Boswell, "much the fashion for several ladies to have evening assemblies, where the fair sex might participate in conversation with literary and ingenious men, animated by a desire to please."<sup>1</sup> These soirées were at first called "blue-stocking meetings," from the stockings worn by Benjamin Stillingfleet,<sup>2</sup> who was a favourite of the ladies, and later, "Bas Bleu" meetings. Both names were given in derision by the persons who were not invited, and did not consider it even 'fashionable' to be learned. At these meetings the "ladies presided and scholars were welcomed."

Hannah More, who joined the coterie much later, has left a vivid description of a typical "Bas Bleu" evening and the prominent personages to be usually found on the occasion. "Bas Bleu" is addressed to Mrs. Vesey, and we are first told how such meetings came into existence:

Long was Society o'er-run  
By Whist, that desolating Hun;  
Long did Quadrille despotic sit,  
The vandal of Colloquial wit;  
And conversation's setting light  
Lay half-obscur'd in Gothick night  
Till Leo's triple crown, to you,  
Boscawen sage, bright Montagu,

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1. Boswell's Life of Johnson, ed. Hill, G. B., Vol. 4, p. 108.

2. A letter to Dr. Monsey from Mrs. Montagu in March 1757 contains the word 'blue-stockings' first. She wrote of Stillingfleet that he had 'left off his old friends and his blue-stockings, and is at operas and other gay assemblies every night.' Dr. Doran: *A Lady of the Last Century*, 1873, p. 270.



Divided fell;—your cares in haste  
 Rescued the ravag'd realms of Taste;  
 And Lyttelton's accomplished name,  
 And witty Pult'ney shar'd the fame.

It was a mixed gathering of all sorts, their common distinction being Art or Learning, whether accompanied or not by rank.

Here sober Duchesses are seen  
 Chaste wits, and critics void of spleen;  
 Physicians fraught with real Science,  
 And Whigs and Tories in alliance.

Poets, bishops, lawyers, peers, antiquaries and travellers,—all were welcome.

Whether it was at Mrs. Montagu's or Mrs. Vesey's, there was only one deity worshipped.

“ . . . . Conversation, Soothing Power,  
 Goddess of the Social Hour.”

“ Still be thy nightly offerings paid,  
 Libations large of limonade!  
 On silver vases, loaded rise  
 The biscuits' ample sacrifice!  
 Nor be the milk-white streams forgot  
 Of thirst-assuaging cool orgeat;  
 Rise, incense pure from fragrant Tea,  
 Delicious incense, worthy Thee!”<sup>1</sup>

From their inception, Lyttelton was a familiar figure at these meetings, especially at those held at Mrs. Montagu's. Their acquaintance had begun very early, though it was only about 1750, that real friendship sprang up between them.

Elizabeth Robinson, as Mrs. Montagu was before her marriage, was a high-spirited restless young lady

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1. Hannah More: “The Bas Bleu,” 1786. Circulated in MS., 1784.

of twenty, when she first met Lyttelton in 1740 at a Court Assembly at St. James's. As she wrote to a friend, she found him 'a perfect gentleman and scholar.' "Mr. Lyttelton has something of an elegance in all his compositions, let the subject be ever so trifling. . . . Happy is the genius that can drink inspiration at every stream and gather similes with every nosegay."<sup>1</sup> This was the commencement of a long friendship, but for nearly ten years after the Court reception, they did not meet often. Meanwhile in 1742, Miss Robinson married a wealthy gentleman, Edward Montagu, and thus came to own a name that held sway for more than fifty years in the highest circles of Society in London, both intellectual and aristocratic. She made frequent visits to Bath and Tunbridge Wells; it is probable, but not certain, that she may have met there Lyttelton, whose favourite resorts were the same, and thus improved her acquaintance.

With her great social gifts, and her vivacity, it was not long before she thought of having a permanent residence in Hill Street, Mayfair, where she could freely entertain the best society in London, mostly of the distinguished in learning, intellect and art. Her assemblies soon became famous, and in a few years all the best writers and noted persons in London were at her evening "conversation parties." From 1750, Lyttelton became a regular visitor at her house in Hill Street, as also other

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1. See the letters of Mrs. E. Montagu, ed. by M. Montagu, 1813, Vol. 1, pp. 132-33.

In a previous letter she had written that Lyttelton was dressed according to Polonius's instruction, "rich, not gaudy; costly but not exprest in fancy." Vol. 1, p. 124.

celebrities—Horace Walpole, Pulteney (Lord Bath), Reynolds,<sup>1</sup> Garrick, Stillingfleet, Burke, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Boscawen, and on some occasions Dr. Johnson.

Lyttelton gradually became a very great personal friend of Mrs. Montagu. He called her 'The Madonna,' a name which often occurs in his letters to her.<sup>2</sup> He wrote to her on the political intrigues of 1756, on books and religion, on his own domestic affairs, on all possible topics. After describing the Government's fall in late 1756, he wrote to Mrs. Montagu: "The confusion is as great as the worst enemies to this kingdom can wish. . . . How happy are Mr. Stillingfleet and Mr. Torriano to enjoy the Madonna's conversation, instead of hearing the nonsensical speculations of the town on the miserable politics of these miserable times."

At the end of his letter on the 'Journey to Wales,' Lyttelton wrote to Bower, also Mrs. Montagu's friend, "If you write to the Madonna, do not fail to assure her of my truest devotion. The most zealous Welsh Catholic does not honour St. Winifred more than I do her." Lyttelton's admiration for the lady was at times almost ecstatic in its fervour. Writing about the education of his daughter Lucy to Mrs. Montagu, Lyttelton says, "To make her as perfect as I could wish she wants nothing but the society of the Madonna—I don't say she would

1. Reynolds painted a portrait of Lyttelton, that is now at Hagley Hall.

2. Mrs. Climençon's "Elizabeth Montagu, Queen of the Blues," 1923, contains a large number of these letters and gives an exhaustive account of the quarrel between her and Johnson, that arose after the publication of the latter's 'Life of Lyttelton.' (Vol. 2, pp. 156-65.)

attain to the sublime of your genius, but perhaps *that* is more than a woman wants.”<sup>1</sup>

The intimacy between the two was such indeed that it excited gossip in mischievous persons, but their friendship was, in its strictest sense, open and Platonic—a friendship of which no man of honour could in the least be ashamed of. Eighteenth Century society, however, was inordinately fond of scandal; in its reckless way, it made use of what material it could. Horace Walpole wrote to George Montagu in 1759: “I was diverted the other day with the story of a lady of that name (Montagu) and a lord whose initial is no further from hers than he himself is supposed to be. Her postilion, a lad of fifteen said, ‘I am not such a child but I can guess something. Whenever my lord comes to my lady, she orders the porter to let in nobody else, and they call for pen and ink, and say they are going to write history!’ Is not this *finesse* so like him? I am persuaded now that he is parted, (from his second wife) that he will forget he is married, and propose himself in form to some woman or other.”<sup>2</sup>

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1. Mrs. Wyndham: *Chronicles*, Vol. 2, p. 287. The admiration was mutual. On one occasion when Lyttelton was hesitating about publishing a poem he had written on Glover's ‘Leonidas,’ Mrs. Montagu wrote in a fanciful strain. “When will your *Leonidas* appear? I believe your Lordship and I shall have many a battle upon the subject. You will come like the Persian Monarch, you will appear in all the pomp of learning with a vast muster of eloquence, and abundance of Art, and you will dazzle by the brightness of your arms, and terrify with the number of your troops; all the epic poets but Horace and Ossian perhaps on your side; I shall be as a poor Spartan, unassisted, uneloquent, unadorned, but if your poem cannot enter the *straits of heart*, I shall be invincible.”

—*Grenville Correspondence*, Vol. 4, p. 497.

2. Toynbee: *Letters*, Vol. 4, p. 319.

Pulteney, too, now Lord Bath, was a great friend of Mrs. Montagu, and Lyttelton celebrated this friendship by inviting them to Hagley in October, 1762. There were special entertainments in the park in honour of the guests, among whom were also Mrs. Vesey and her husband. 'Soft music concealed near the cascades,' the 'French Horns réverberating from hill to hill,' and other amusements kept Mrs. Montagu in great spirits.<sup>1</sup> Lyttelton composed a poem on the occasion of the visit, called the 'Vision.' A bard appeared to the poet; he sang of the superiority of the myrtle to the oak and then

"Closed the bard his mystic song—his shade,  
Shrunk from my grasp, and into air  
decayed,

But left imprinted on my vanished view,  
The forms of Pulteney and Montagu."<sup>2</sup>

Whenever Lyttelton was in London, he was a constant guest at Mrs. Montagu's famous parties. His great admiration for his hostess was not singular or ill bestowed, when she received homage and praise even from the stolid Dr. Johnson. "She diffuses more knowledge than any woman I know," he is said to have told Mrs. Thrale—"or indeed almost any man." On another occasion, the Doctor said, "Conversing with her, you may find variety in one."<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Montagu, in her turn, was as great an admirer of Lyttelton. In 1780 she anonymously

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1. In praise of Hagley, Mrs. Montagu once quoted from Ariosto.

"Culte pianure e delicate colli

Chiare acque, ombrose rive, e prati molti."

The letters of Mrs. E. Montagu, 1813, Vol. 4, p. 311.

2. Dr. Doran: *A Lady of the Last Century*, pp. 132, 138.

3. Boswell: *Johnson*, ed. G. B. Hill, Vol. 4, p. 275.

contributed three dialogues to Lyttelton's 'Dialogues of the Dead.' They were called 'Three Dialogues by another hand'—between Cadmus and Hercules, Mercury and A Modern Fine Lady, lastly, Plutarch, Charon and A Modern Bookseller. The last two are amongst the best in the book and possess great merit. When Mrs. Montagu's once famous 'Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespeare' appeared some years later, among the first to lavish unstinted praise on the book, were Lyttelton, Reynolds and Lord Temple.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Beattie, the Scottish poet and philosopher, was a great friend of Lyttelton and Mrs. Montagu. Miss Forbes in 'Beattie and his Friends' has published the journal kept by Beattie during his visit to London in the spring of 1773. The following extracts give an interesting account of the activities in Mrs. Montagu's circle:

*May 10th.* At seven went to an Assembly, or Conversation, or Rout at Mrs. Montagu's. Much company. Had a good deal of chat with some of the ladies, and Lord Lyttelton and Mrs. Carter.

*May 24th.* Mrs. Montagu sent her coach for Mrs. Beattie and me at seven. We sat with her and Mrs. Carter and Lord Lyttelton, till eleven. Much agreeable conversation about Homer, Virgil. . . .

*May 25th.* Mrs. Beattie and I dined with Mrs. Montagu. Lord Lyttelton came in the evening, being, he said, anxious to renew the agreeable conversation he had with us last night,

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1. Grenville Papers, Vol. 4, p. 426. Johnson was indifferent towards the 'Essay,' and he remarked to Reynolds: 'Sir, it does *her* honour, but it would do nobody else honour.'

but Mrs. Montagu being engaged, we had to separate at nine.

*May 23rd.* Mrs. Beattie and I dined with the Duchess of Portland along with Mrs. Montagu and Lord Lyttelton.

*June 6th.* At nine I left him ( The Archbishop of York ) and returned to Mrs. Montagu's with whom I found Lord Lyttelton, and the celebrated General Paoli, the Corsican. The conversation was all in French. . . . .

Mrs. Vesey was not an intimate friend, though Lyttelton knew her well, as she was one of the leading hostesses among the ' Blue-Stockings.' A gentle disposition and a simple heart which made her seem always young in spirits brought her the sobriquet of ' Sylph.' Agmondesham Vesey, her second husband, was a member of Parliament and had learning enough to assist Lyttelton in the compiling of material for the ' History of Henry II.' Her ' Tuesday ' parties were well attended, and, according to some, far better arranged, in point of order, than Mrs. Montagu's gatherings at Hill Street, though Walpole called her parties ' Babels.' She was, however, quite a popular figure in the coterie.

The most learned lady among the Blue-Stockings was Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, who could, in Johnson's words, " make a pudding as well as translate Epic-tetus from the Greek, and work a handkerchief as well as compose a poem."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, according to Sir William Wraxall, " Mrs. Carter so well known by her erudition, the Madame Dacier of England, from her religious cast of character and gravity of

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1. Boswell: Life of Johnson, ed. G. B. Hill, Vol. 5, p. 329.

deportment, no less than from her intellectual acquirements, was more formed to impose some check on the asperity and eccentricities of Johnson."<sup>1</sup> In the company of Lyttelton she must have found a soul and an understanding most congenial to her own. Lyttelton came to know this 'woman of wit and wisdom,'<sup>2</sup> in December, 1755, when she wrote to him for monetary help on behalf of a poor woman, a Mrs. Parker, who was in great distress. A generous response from Lyttelton led to a deep friendship, and from this time, Mrs. Carter came to know him "on terms of very confidential intimacy."<sup>3</sup>

In the summer of 1761, Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Carter, Lyttelton and Pulteney met together to "sport sentiment from morn till noon, from noon to dewy eve." They had a fairly busy holiday, for Mrs. Carter complained that "two public breakfasts, two days' excursions into Essex, and one fit and a half of the headache, left her very little leisure for any other occupation."<sup>4</sup> During their stay, Mrs. Carter was prevailed upon by her three friends to consider seriously the publication of her poems. When the volume came out in the succeeding year, Lyttelton wrote highly panegyrical verses, in the preface, which have been printed in his 'Complete Works.' Neither the eulogy nor the poems of Mrs. Carter

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1. The Historical and Posthumous Memoirs of Sir N. William Wraxall, 1772-84, ed. H. B. Wheatley, 1884, Vol. 1, p. 110.

2. "A Woman of Wit and Wisdom," A. C. Gaussen, 1906.

3. Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. E. Carter, A. Pennington, 1808, Vol. 1, p. 217.

4. "A Woman of Wit and Wisdom," A. C. Gaussen, 1906, pp. 202-203.



possess any great merit. The coterie was evidently a society for mutual admiration, as one can easily guess from a letter of Mrs. Carter's to Mrs. Chapone, a minor Blue-Stocking: "I am sufficiently vain of my Lord Lyttelton's approbation of the Introduction to Epictetus; and I am more vain of the honour of being ranked amongst his friends. I extremely enjoy what his Lordship says about the Ode, which, indeed, I think, is a masterpiece." The 'Ode' was written, as should be naturally expected, by Mrs. Chapone, and prefixed to Mrs. Carter's translation of Epictetus.

Horace Walpole, who was not an unfamiliar member of the circle, knew Lyttelton very well. He was a personal friend of Lyttelton's brother, Charles, the Dean of Exeter. He visited Hagley once or twice, met Lyttelton often at the House of Commons and at Mrs. Montagu's assemblies. He was at first no friend to Lyttelton, when the latter constantly attacked Sir Robert Walpole in the early days of his political career. He wrote pamphlets in reply to Lyttelton's 'A Letter to the Tories'; and his correspondence contains very uncomplimentary references to Lyttelton, some of which have already been given. Sneers and mocking references abound in the correspondence. In one place, Walpole calls Lyttelton a most honest man; in another, attributes the meanest motives to him in the picturesque language he ever revelled in. Commenting on Lyttelton's joining the Newcastle Ministry in 1754, he writes that "Sir George Lyttelton, whose warmest prayer was to go to Heaven in a coronet, undertook to be a factor for himself," alluding to the peerage he later got. Elsewhere, he writes that "Lyttelton, when he had been forced to quit virtue, took up

religion." The sneers are endless; on two or three occasions, with his infinite gift for mischief, Horace Walpole led the trusting Lyttelton into the most embarrassing situations; yet, outwardly, and in his letters to Lyttelton, he assumed to be a great friend and wrote in the most flattering terms he could. Here is a typical instance of Walpole's perhaps unconscious hypocrisy. On June 20th, 1758, he wrote to Lyttelton from whom he had borrowed the proof-copy of a volume of 'The History of Henry II.'

"I twice waited on you in Hill Street to thank you for the great favour of lending me your History, which I am sorry I kept longer than you intended; but you must not wonder, I read it with as great attention as pleasure: it is not a book to skim, but to learn by heart, if one means to learn anything of England. You call it the History of Henry II. It is literally the History of our Constitution, and will last much longer than I fear the latter will, for alas! my Lord, your style, which will fix and preserve our language, cannot do what nature cannot do, reform the nature of man. . . ."

And yet the same Horace Walpole wrote to a friend in 1771: "I began it but, I don't know how, I was tired. It is so crowded with clouds of words, and they are so uninteresting that I think one may dispute, as the metaphysicians do, whether all the space is a plenum or vacuum."<sup>2</sup> He called the 'Dialogues of the Dead' 'Dead Dialogues,' rather 'profanely' in the words of Austin Dobson, and the style, which he had so profusely, and un-

1. Toynbee: Letters of Horace Walpole, Vol. 4, p. 150.

2. On another occasion he called the book "most silly, and most cruel penance to read it." Vol. 13.

necessarily praised once, "a mixture of bombast, poetry and vulgarisms."<sup>1</sup>

An interesting letter was written by Walpole to Lyttelton in August 1757, in reply to one from the latter, praising Gray's two odes, the 'Progress of Poetry' and 'The Bard.'<sup>2</sup> There is a very detailed criticism of Gray in the long letter Walpole wrote, and many remarkable opinions. We get glimpses of Lyttelton's comments in the following extracts: "It is a satisfaction to show a thing of great merit to a man of great taste. Your Lordship's approbation is conclusive, and it stamps a disgrace on the age, who have not given themselves the trouble to see any beauties in these Odes of Mr. Gray. They have cast their eyes over them, found them obscure, and looked no further, yet perhaps no composition ever had more sublime beauties than are in each. I agree with your Lordship in preferring the last upon the whole. . . . In answer to your Lordship's objection to *many-twinkling*, in that beautiful epode, I will quote authority to which you will yield. As Greek as the expression is, it struck Mrs. Garrick, and she says on that whole picture, that Mr. Gray is the only poet who ever understood dancing."

To this letter Lyttelton replied in a few days:

"I am proud that the obscurity thrown over some parts of it has not hindered me from seeing

1. Toynbee: Vol. 8, p. 117. For a parody of Lyttelton's style by Walpole, see his letter of July 31, 1762, to the Countess of Aylesbury. Toynbee: Vol. 5, pp. 221-22.

2. The letter in full is in Toynbee: Letters of Horace Walpole, Vol. 4, pp. 84-88. Gray wrote to Mason in August, 1757: 'Lord Lyttelton and Mr. Shenstone admire me, but wish I had been a little clearer.' The Works of Gray: ed. E. Gosse, 1884, Vol. 2, pp. 327-28.

and admiring the bright and glorious flame of poetical fire in Mr. Gray's Odes when you tell me it has escaped the eye of the public. But why should any spots remain in this sun? The second strophe of the first Ode may be easily altered and made clear. . . . All the rest is very fine, especially the four first and the three last verses. . . . Nothing ever exceeded the three last stanzas in greatness of imagination or nobleness of expression. . . . A poet is not obliged to draw his characters with the exactness of a critic or historian.

In the second Ode—(The Bard)—All the last stanza, from *Fond Impious Man*, in my opinion, is very sublime and the poem cannot end better or in a manner more striking than with the two last lines. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

If Lyttelton was perhaps too fond of the Blue-Stockings, and the parties in Hill Street, Mayfair, there was a reason for such preference. He had little peace in his home at Hagley. His second marriage had proved, as the years went by, more and more unhappy. Lady Lyttelton was indeed a clever and accomplished woman; she possessed considerable wit, and, later in life, she used to exchange sallies with Horace Walpole.<sup>2</sup> But the tastes of husband

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1. Toynbee: Letters, Supplement, Vol. 2, pp. 100-101.

2. See Letters of Horace Walpole: ed. Toynbee, Vol. 9, p. 103 and Vol. 13, pp. 221-22. Robert Graves gives a portrait of Lady Lyttelton in 'The Spiritual Quixote.' Edition of 1808; Vol. 2, pp. 77-79. He describes her as 'the finest woman and the best Christian in England.' 'There was not a poor person, a sick person, or a wicked person, within five miles of the place, but she found them money, physic or good advice.' 'My Lady has wit at will, and can hold discourse with any Lord or Bishop that comes to Sir George's table.' It is difficult to reconcile this picture with her later conduct.

and wife differed considerably; the latter disliked Lyttelton's society and did not care to hide it. Mrs. Montagu wrote about a visit to Tunbridge Wells which the two had made in 1752, "Sir George and Lady Lyttelton went away this morning. As to the lady, she is so unsociable and retired, her departure makes no difference in the society. In her manners she signified a dislike and contempt of the company. . . ." Sedate literary people and bishops, however witty they were, (such was the company at Tunbridge Wells) probably bored Lady Lyttelton, accustomed as she was to gay and lively society. There were dances and other social engagements at Hagley, over which Lady Lyttelton presided, but they did not relieve her tedium much. She probably disliked her husband also intensely, for within six or seven years of the marriage, she allowed herself to run into indiscretions with a young man called George Durant, the son of the local rector. She had an infernal temper, as her brother-in-law Charles wrote, and she did not scruple to neglect thoroughly her husband's guests and relations in her preoccupation with her lover. Lyttelton, getting a few hints from his brother, became alarmed at her conduct, and gave her a strict injunction "never to see George Durant alone." Lady Lyttelton promised, but went on behaving worse than ever. There was a temporary patching up of differences between her and her husband, but matters came to a head in 1759, so that the only course open to Lyttelton was a deed of separation. In July of that year the separation took place, much to the relief of both parties. Lyttelton wrote to his brother:

"Had I known two years ago all that I know now, I should have parted with her then and been

the new house was begun early in 1759, and ended a little more than a year later.

A considerable amount of money had been spent on the rebuilding, but his brothers helped Lyttelton with some part of it, and in other ways, so that the strain on his resources was not so great as it otherwise might have been. Charles, Dean of Exeter, "contributed a classical dairy-house for the garden," and Admiral Smith presented "a temple copied from that of Theseus of Athens" and built by the architect, 'Athenian' Stuart, "a true Attic Building; a portico of six pillars," wrote Lyttelton to Mrs. Montagu, "which will make a fine object to my house, and command a most beautiful view of the country!" The master of the house took great pains to get the little odds and ends which were necessary for the final touches. "I am as busy here with my workmen as I was when Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as much plagued with fools and knaves. . . . Among other disappointments, my chairs and tables for my drawing room are not yet sent, though they were promised a month ago."<sup>1</sup>

At last the house was completed. The grand housewarming started on the first of September, 1760, and lasted three days. There was great jollity and merriment; all the country was there and Lyttelton's distinguished friends from London came down especially to Hagley for the festivities.<sup>2</sup>

1. Mrs. Wyndham: *Chronicles*, Vol. 2, pp. 296-99.

2. Hagley Hall was, for the most part, burnt down by a disastrous fire on 24th December, 1925. There was considerable loss, but part of the library and the pictures, and the most valuable books were all recovered. See 'The Times,' London, of 28th, 29th and 30th December, 1925, and 2nd, 4th and 6th January, 1926, for a description of the hall, the collection of pictures and the library.

As has been said before, Lyttelton had no children by his second marriage. The eldest of his three children by his first wife, was Thomas, who grew up to be a precociously intelligent and bright boy. Mary, the last child, died in her infancy, when she was about two years old. Her sister Lucy, the second child, stayed mostly with her grandmother and grew up into a slim handsome young woman. She married in her twenty-third year, Arthur Viscount Valentia, afterwards Lord Mountmorris.

Lyttelton was very fond of his children and was especially proud of young Tom, because of his brilliant record at school. Tom wrote long letters to Mrs. Montagu, his father's friend, which were far above the level of an average school boy's correspondence. "The boy shows an understanding that is very astonishing," wrote Mrs. Montagu to his father.

In the summer of 1759, about the end of July, Lyttelton set out with his son on a long tour "through the north of England and Scotland as far as Inverary."<sup>1</sup> "The weather was the finest I ever saw in my life," he wrote to his brother in Jamaica, "and I had great honours done me by the notability and the principal cities in Scotland, as if I had been a first Minister or the head of a faction. But much the greater pleasure I had in my tour was from the company of my son, whom I carried along with me, and from the approbation (I might say admiration) which his figure, behaviour, and parts drew from all sorts of people wherever we went. Indeed his mother has given him her *don de plaisir*, and he joins to an excellent understanding the best of hearts, and

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1. See Phillimore: pp. 614, 622-23.

more discretion than I ever observed in any young man, except you."

The magistrates and corporation of Edinburgh gave a dinner in honour of Lord Lyttelton and his son, and gave them the freedom of the city. So did "all the most considerable towns," and Lyttelton was very proud of his reception. The Duke of Argyle supped with them. "He honoured us with his presence at the dinner, a distinction he has never paid to any other man upon such occasion."

Lyttelton had taken, however, a more pleasurable tour three years before, in July 1756, when he went to Wales; an account of the tour he sent to Archibald Bower, who, as has been seen, was one of his most undeserving protégés. It is in the form of two letters and is published in his *Complete Works*.<sup>2</sup> There are some excellent descriptions, in Lyttelton's letters, of the places and the scenery he passed through. There is one of Powis Castle, and the prospect from its walls. Lyttelton had desired to ascend Snowdon, "but, alas! the top of it, and all the fine prospects which I hope to see from thence, are covered with rain." The party (for Lyttelton had two friends with him, Mr. D.—and Mr. P.—), however, ascended "the mountain of Berwin, one of the highest in Wales." "When we came to the top of it, a prospect opened to us which struck the mind with awful astonishment. Nature is in all her majesty here; but it is the majesty of a tyrant, frowning over the ruins and desolation of a country. The enormous mountains, or rather rocks, of

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1. Mrs. Wyndham: *Chronicles of the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. 2, pp. 290-91.

2. *Complete Works*: 1776, Vol. 3, pp. 331-32.



Merionethshire enclosed us all around. There is not upon these mountains a tree or shrub, or a blade of grass; nor did we see any marks of habitations or culture in the whole space. Between them is a solitude fit for Despair to inhabit; whereas all we had seen before in Wales seemed to inspire the meditations of love."

Then follows a charming description of the town of Bala with its beautiful lake, "most famous for the beauty of its women." "The lake produces very fine trout, and a fish called *Whiting*, peculiar to itself, and of so delicate a taste that I believe you would prefer the flavour of it to the lips of the fair maids of Bala." Lyttelton goes into raptures over "Festiniog, a village in Merionethshire, the vale before which is the most perfectly beautiful of all we had seen." Lyttelton was keenly alive to the beauty of Nature all around him; his pen eagerly responded to the irresistible appeal of a beautiful spot. Few men in his time could have described Festiniog more happily. "From the height of this village you have a view of the sea. The hills are green, and well shaded with wood. There is a lovely rivulet, which winds through the bottom; on each side are meadows, and above are corn-fields along the sides of the hills; at each end are high mountains which seemed placed there to guard this charming retreat against any invaders. With the woman one loves, with the friend of one's heart, and a good study of books, one might pass an age there, and think it a day."

Lyttelton climbed Moel Guidon, the nest of the Eagle, and Moel Happaock, the nest of the Hawk, "from whence we saw a phenomenon new to our eyes, but common in Wales." "On the one side

was midnight, on the other bright day; . . . . . Snowdon, on our left, was wrapped in clouds from top to bottom; but on the right the sun shone most gloriously over the sea coast of Carnarvon."

Lyttelton enjoyed his journey very much in spite of his weak constitution and growing age.<sup>1</sup> The party halted at Carnarvon for some time and then proceeded to Anglesey. "We travelled along the shore of Menai . . . . our road led us over fine shady lawns, perfumed so with honeysuckles that they were a *paradisetto*, over gentle hills, from whence we had a lovely view of the Menai, and the isle of Anglesey, . . . . and then lost them again in agreeable valleys, like those of Reading or the Hertfordshire vales." Conway Castle made a great impression upon Lyttelton, and he gives a long detailed description, enough to satisfy even an antiquary. The next place to be visited was Denbigh Castle, and then Wrexham Church. At Winstay, he saw "the river Dee winding in so romantic and charming a manner," that he thought it exceeded that of Festiniog or any 'confined prospect' he had ever beheld. "The countryside round about was exceedingly fertile and very romantic." "While I was looking at it, I asked Mr. P.—'Whether he thought it possible for the eyes to behold a more pleasing sight?' He said, 'Yes, the sight of a woman one loves.' My answer was, 'when I was in love, I thought so.' " A visit to Chirk Castle ended the tour in Wales, and Lyttelton returned to London with a

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1. At the end of the first letter, Lyttelton wrote in high spirits: "Adieu, my dear Bower, I am perfectly well, *eat like a horse and sleep like a monk*; so that I may, by this ramble, preserve a stock of health, that may last all winter, and carry me through my Parliamentary campaign."

"stock of health" that "lasted him the whole winter."

Lyttelton was thus one of those rare people of his time, who could feel a genuine love for beauty in Nature. It was therefore fitting that Doctor John Brown, the author of the 'Estimate,' should have addressed to Lyttelton his letter about Keswick, which has been described as 'the first published work on the picturesque.' Although it was printed in 1767, it must have been written about 1756, when Brown was still in Lakeland. It was read widely and 'frequently referred to in the periodicals as familiar;' it thus made the lake scenery famous, and was printed in Pearch's Supplement to Dodsley's 'Miscellanies' in 1768, as a note to Dalton's *Descriptive Poem*, with the English lake scenery as its theme. Brown was well known to Pitt, Hardwicke and Warburton, and it was perhaps through them he came to be acquainted with Lyttelton. He was, however, a very 'impracticable person,'<sup>2</sup> and had a curious temper which engaged him in many quarrels. So in 1760, Brown took umbrage when Lyttelton "in a numerous and mixed company neglected to take notice of our author in so respectful a manner as he thought he deserved."<sup>3</sup> In resentment at this trivial oversight on Lyttelton's part, the Doctor wrote "An Additional Dialogue of the Dead, between Aristides and Pericles," attacking Lyttelton's political career. It was expected that Pitt would feel pleased, but the author was disappointed, for Pitt and Lyttelton had been not long before reconciled to each other.

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1. E. Manwaring: *Italian Landscape in Eighteenth Century England*, 1925, p. 175. See also 'The Picturesque,' by C. Hussey, 1927, pp. 97-98.

2. Article on Dr. John Brown (1715-1766) in the *D. N. B.*

3. J. Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, Vol. 2, p. 339.

## CHAPTER X

1760-1773

### THE 'DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.' THE HISTORY OF HENRY II. LAST DAYS.

The last thirteen years of Lyttelton's life were not marked by the active devotion to politics of the previous period; although, for a member of the Upper House, he was more than keenly interested in the great issues of the rights of the American Colonies which cropped up during the decade under review.

In 1763, Lord Lyttelton spoke very well on the Cider Bill, which he opposed with vehemence and spirit. Horace Walpole gives him ungrudging praise in his account of the debate.<sup>1</sup> The same year, in November, there was a great fight on the motion for extending the privilege of Parliament to writing and printing seditious libels. Lyttelton's excellent speech opposing the resolution is the only one in the debate that has ever been preserved, and it is printed in his Complete Works.<sup>2</sup> In February 1764, Lyttelton led an attack on a Jacobitical treatise, "*Droit le Roi*," by T. Brecknock, violating the Bill of Rights and the principles of the Revolution. He moved the resolution himself, characterising the work as aiming at the subversion of liberty. The motion was carried

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1. Memoirs of George III, 1894, Vol. 1, p. 200.

2. Complete Works, Vol. 3, pp. 37-47. See also Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England, 1811, Vol. 15, pp. 1365-1371.

and the book was ordered to be publicly burnt.<sup>1</sup> The same year, a complete reconciliation took place between Lyttelton, and Pitt and Temple.

In April 1765, Lyttelton took a prominent part in the debate on the Regency Bill. "He made a fine speech," writes Walpole, "against giving unconstitutional powers such as that of appointing an unknown person Regent. It was asking them, he said, to put out their own eyes."<sup>2</sup> His motion to that effect, however, was rejected by the Lords. Pitt and Lyttelton were now so great friends again that the latter wrote to Pitt as follows, on hearing the news of Pynsent's generous bequest to Pitt,— "Fortune comes to you in the only manner in which you would give her a hearty welcome; she is brought by virtue and attended by honour."

Though out of office, and a member of the Upper House, Lyttelton was still an important figure in the politics of the day, and it is not surprising to read from Walpole's 'Memoirs of the Reign of George III' that he was offered by the Duke of Cumberland in May 1765 the post of First Lord of the Treasury, with power to form an administration, excluding Pitt and Temple.<sup>3</sup> Lyttelton declined the offer. In his letter of July 11th, 1765 to Lord Temple, Lyttelton writes of a second offer. "On Tuesday morning, Mr. Conway came to me from the Duke of Cumberland and pressed me to take a part in the new arrangements. My answer was that I should have been willing and happy to do so, if Mr. Pitt

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1. H. Walpole: *Memoirs of George III*, 1894, Vol. 1, p. 305.

2. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, p. 79.

3. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, p. 123.

and your Lordship had been at the head of it, but could not think of separating myself from you in any system of administration." From this letter it is evident that the reconciliation was genuine and sincere.

With all his sound principles of Whiggism, and his zeal for liberty, and for the revolution of 1688, Lyttelton was a reactionary in respect of American affairs. Like many eminent men and politicians of his day, he lacked vision and broad-mindedness when it came to the justice of the demands of the American settlers. In December 1765, he supported the amendment to the Address, and showed himself a hearty advocate of harsher and more oppressive measures against the colonists. The elaborate speech he made the following month in a determined opposition to the repeal of the Stamp Act<sup>2</sup> is a vivid contrast to the radical views he had expressed on liberty and freedom in the 'Persian Letters' thirty years before. Johnson is undoubtedly right to a certain extent when he says, "The Letters have something of that indistinct and headstrong ardour for liberty, which a man of genius always catches, when he enters the world, and always suffers to cool as he passes forward."<sup>3</sup> E. Lawrence in his 'Lives of British Historians' has a caustic remark to make in this connection.<sup>4</sup> "His constitutional knowledge

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1. Phillimore: *Memoirs of George, Lord Lyttelton*, pp. 684-85.

2. Phillimore: 692-703. Also, Cobbett's *Parliamentary History of England*, 1811, Vol. 16, pp. 166-168.

3. Johnson: *Lives of the English Poets*, ed. by G. B. Hill, Vol. 3, p. 446.

4. E. Lawrence: *Lives of the British Historians*, 1855, Vol. 1, p. 380.

was considerable and he had certainly a passion for what he believed to be liberty, but his political theories were all superficial, and he could advocate oppression in America while he upheld freedom at home." This charge is perhaps justified, when we consider Lyttelton's political views in the 'Persian Letters,' his strong protests against the encroachment of the royal prerogative on the Constitution, and his initiative in the matter of the proscription and burning of 'Droit le Roi'—the *Jacobitical treatise*, as Walpole calls it. Moreover, at the end of 1766, he took part in the Indemnity Bill as a defender of the constitution against the growing use of royal prerogatives, and he is supposed to have assisted Temple and one Mackintosh in writing a pamphlet named 'A Speech in behalf of the Constitution against the suspending and dispensing Prerogative.'

In March 1767, Lyttelton made a strong protest against the grant of eight thousand pounds per year to the Royal Dukes, and opposed the Bill. He considered the step most ill-advised, and quoted a saying of Lord Burleigh: "That he hated to see the Royal Treasury swell, like a distempered spleen, when the other parts of the Commonwealth were in consumption." He thought the manner of making the grant "unprecedented, impolitic and dangerous." Though in regard to the American question, Lyttelton seemed to have lost his 'ardour for liberty,' this speech shows the same zealous Whig as before. Again, in February 1770, he brought to bear his good knowledge of Constitutional Law upon the Middlesex Election and the resolution of the Commons

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1. Grenville Papers, Vol. 3, December 10, 1766.

incapacitating Wilkes from being elected to the House. He supported Rockingham's resolution condemning the procedure of the House of Commons in a very spirited speech. "No power," he emphasized, "except that of the *Whole* legislature, can in any manner create a new incapacity, and every legal right which the subject enjoys is secured to him by that law from whence he derived it. These great fundamental truths must ever remain in force."<sup>1</sup>

In 1772, he discouraged the idea that the Whigs should secede from the House, probably bearing in mind the unsatisfactory result of the secession in 1739.<sup>2</sup>

Lyttelton thus continued to take an active interest in English politics till the close of his life. Phillimore's 'Memoirs' contain a number of letters that passed between Pitt, now the Earl of Chatham, and Lyttelton during the years 1771 and 1772.

It is perhaps not out of place here to review and sum up a career in politics that lasted over forty years, from 1730 to 1773. For fifteen years, Lyttelton worked in the Opposition against Walpole, and gradually came to the forefront as a prominent man in his party by his speeches and journalistic efforts. For the following twelve years, he was on the Government benches in the Pelham and Newcastle Ministries. Here, in spite of Pitt's tactics, he remained loyal to the Government, and accepted in full the principle of ministerial responsibility, a rather unusual trait in the politicians of the day. His elevation to the peerage did not convert him into an

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1. Cobbett: Parliamentary History, 1811, Vol. 16, p. 957. Phillimore, pp. 756-57.

2. The Chatham Correspondence, Vol. 4, p. 163.



inactive and self-contented member of the Upper House. Even in that usually dull and somnolent body of elders, Lyttelton remained an active Whig, and stuck to his independent radical views, as in the debate on the Indemnity Bill, the Regency Question, the Middlesex Election, and the '*Droit le Roi*' Resolution. He was no doubt short-sighted in his attitude towards the American Colonies, but he erred in good company, if he erred badly. Throughout his career he was honest and sincere, in his deeds as well as professions. It is true, Horace Walpole remarks that "his political apostasy was as flagrant as Pitt's,"<sup>1</sup> but Walpole was not entirely unbiassed against Lyttelton, the 'great enemy of his uncle,' as he once called him. Waldegrave, by no means a great admirer of Lyttelton, admits, 'He was by far the honestest man of the whole society.'<sup>2</sup> His parliamentary speeches were of a high order, though perhaps they lacked the fire and enthusiasm, the bite and sting of Pitt's declamations. They were, however, well reasoned and sensible, elegant and energetic, always in taste. According to Waldegrave, 'he was not ready in debate, but his studied orations were excellent.' Rockingham says: "His speech on the Jewish Bill has been cited as a model of oratory."<sup>3</sup> Pitt writes to Hardwicke in 1754 that "Sir George has great abilities for set debates and solemn questions."<sup>4</sup> Walpole, too, echoes the same opinion: "Lyttelton spoke well, when he had

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1. Memoirs of the Reign of George II, Vol 1, pp. 201-202.

2. Waldegrave: Memoirs, p. 25.

3. Rockingham Memoirs: ed. Albemarle, 1852, Vol. I, pp. 204-207.

4. Phillimore: p. 474.

studied his speeches."<sup>1</sup> Lord Hervey, a rather malicious critic of Lyttelton, was palpably unjust when he wrote that "he had a great flow of words that were uttered in a lulling monotony, and the little meaning they had to boast of, was borrowed from commonplace maxims of morality, philosophers, and patriots, crudely imbibed, half-digested, ill put together and confusedly refunded."<sup>2</sup> There is no doubt Lyttelton quoted frequently from the classics, and philosophers, but he did not 'play at cards with scraps of history or sentences of Pindar,' as Walpole said. It was, moreover, a very usual thing in those days even for the most unconventional speakers to quote from the classics. Thackeray justly says in 'The Virginians,' "Letters were loved indeed in those quaint times and authors were actually authorities. Gentlemen appealed to Virgil or Lucan in the Courts or the House of Commons. What said Statius, Juvenal—let alone Tully or Tacitus—on such and such a point? Their reign is over now, the good old Heathens."

Lyttelton is now forgotten, his part in Georgian politics is obscure through the march of time: greater statesmen are dim figures to us, though even two centuries have not passed. But in his own day, Lyttelton with his undeniable powers of oratory, his knowledge of the law of the Constitution, his advanced views and sincere zeal—the intimate associate of Chatham, Hardwicke and Grenville—played a considerable part in the history of his times. A staunch Whig and an honest patriot, he rose to be a Privy

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1. *Memoirs of the Reign of George II*, Vol. 1, pp. 201-202.  
 2. *Rockingham Memoirs*: Vol. 1, pp. 206-207.

Councillor,<sup>1</sup> and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lyttelton's political career was thus a long record of useful service; the honours and distinctions he received were fully merited. To the twentieth century, he is a dim and forgotten figure, but in his own generation, there is no doubt, he was a distinguished and prominent man in the world of public affairs.

Early in 1760, Lyttelton published his third important prose work, the 'Dialogues of the Dead.' Like his other books, the 'Dialogues' became very popular; it commanded a good public, and ran into three editions in one year, was frequently reprinted in America, and included in Harrison's 'British Classics' in 1795. It was also deservedly reissued in Cassell's National Library in 1889. Four new dialogues were added by Lyttelton in 1765 in the fourth edition. Three of the dialogues<sup>2</sup> were by "an unknown hand," and were written by Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu and incorporated in the first edition itself. On the continent the book had a good vogue; a translation in French by Elie de Joncourt and Jean Deschamps appeared in 1767.

The dialogues were admittedly written on the model of "Lucian among the Ancient and among the Moderns, Fénelon, Archbishop of Cambray, and Monsieur Fontenelle."<sup>3</sup> The influence in England of Lucian, the pioneer and master of this literary form, became very marked after the Renaissance, as can be seen from the works of Erasmus, More and others, and the indebtedness to him, in some

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1. 1754. Gentleman's Magazine.

2. Nos. 26, 27 and 28.

3. Preface to the 'Dialogues of the Dead.'

respects, of the Elizabethan dramatists. The immediate predecessors of Lyttelton were Prior and Fielding in England, and Fénelon and Fontenelle in France. Lyttelton's "Dialogues" are in most ways superior to those of the English writers before him who imitated Lucian. Though not a pioneer, he was the first to write the 'Dialogues' in an interesting and lively way, bringing to bear upon the book his sound knowledge and classical learning.

Lyttelton gives his plan, in brief, in the preface. "It sets before us the history of all times and all nations, presents to the choice of a writer all characters of remarkable persons, which may best be opposed to or compared with each other and is perhaps one of the most agreeable methods that can be employed, of conveying to the mind any critical, moral, or political observation, because the *dramatic* spirit, which may be thrown into them, gives them more life. And sometimes a *new dress* may render an *old* writer more pleasing." Lyttelton then warns the reader naïvely that "the dead are often supposed, by a necessary fiction, to be thoroughly informed of many particulars, which happened in times posterior to their own, and in all parts of the world." He also protests that he is a good Christian, and says that he has kept Mercury, Charon, and others in his 'Dialogues' as "only the sports of a poetical pen."

Lyttelton succeeded in his intention, and the 'Dialogues' are even today interesting and enjoyable reading. Austin Dobson justly says "that despite Landor, and the admirable *New Lucian* of Henry Duff Trail, they may still be read with interest," and that "they still yield a faded pleasure

to the reader." While they are, in a few places, heavy and dull, on the whole, the general quality is remarkably good.

The imitation of Fénelon in many of the dialogues is evident in the theme and in the manner of treatment. In the comparison of the policy and conduct of the government of kings and statesmen, of the principles of strategy and military skill by famous warriors and generals, in the question of the application of ethical ideas to politics, in the plea for pacifist governments for the nations—in all these, Lyttelton is obviously reminiscent of Fénelon. Lyttelton, however, though avowedly didactic in his Preface, is actually far less so in the Dialogues than Fénelon, who is almost always homiletic. They could not have been otherwise, written as they were by the Archbishop for the instruction of the young Duke of Burgundy. Lyttelton is far more lively and amusing; he is more after Fontenelle, Fénelon's master, in this respect. Lyttelton's 'Dialogues' have thus, in a sense, their own distinction and originality.

There are altogether twenty-nine dialogues in the book, excluding the three written by Mrs. Montagu. Lyttelton's favourite method is to pit one member of a class against another, the contrast or similarity between whom is a matter of great interest, worthy of being threshed out,—in all classes,—kings, philosophers, critics, historians, poets, warriors, tyrants and so forth. There are other dialogues where there is greater variety and more entertaining

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1. See Article in the 'National Review,' London, for June, 1910, 'Lyttelton as a Man of Letters,' and 'Side-Walk Studies,' A. Dobson, 1924, p. 200.

material. It will be useful now to turn to a few individual dialogues.

In 'Plato and Fénelon,' the two, after mutual compliments, (Plato delivering himself still in 'poetical style') discuss the depravity of taste in Fénelon's age among the writers and poets. Plato asks how this evil came about. Fénelon notes that the same decay took place among the Romans after the age of Augustus, and ascribes it to "an immoderate love of *wit*, of *paradox*, of *refinement*." "The works of their writers (the moderns), like the faces of their women, must be painted and adorned with artificial embellishments to attract their regard. And thus the natural beauty of both is lost." Lyttelton seems to dwell here with reproach on the tendency of the poets of his age to seek mere brilliance. 'Mr. Addison—Dr. Swift' is one of the best in the book, and contains a just comparison of the wit and humour of each writer. Dr. Swift starts well: "Surely, Addison, Fortune was exceedingly inclined to play the fool when she made you a *minister of state* and me a *divine*." The conversation gradually turns into a heated argument about the merits of each author's writings and his wit. Swift claims a special gift of wit from nature. "Wit is like grace; it must be given from above." At the critical moment, Mercury appears and the two disputers agree to refer the point to the God of Wit. The divine Hermes is hailed by Addison over a question of precedence. But Mercury greets Swift first in a hearty fashion, and he is so engrossed with the Dean, that the neglected Addison remarks that the dispute is decided in Swift's favour. Mercury, however, hastens to reassure him, and tells him not to be

discouraged. "Sir Roger, Will Honeycomb, Will Wimble and twenty more characters are drawn with the finest strokes of unaffected wit and humour in your admirable writings. Allowing that in the force and spirit of his (Swift's) wit he has really the advantage, how much does he yield to you in all the elegant graces: in the fine touches of delicate sentiment; in developing the secret springs of the soul; in showing the mild lights and shades of a character; in distinctly marking each line and every soft gradation of tints, which would escape the common eye, Swift was able to do nothing that approaches this. He could draw an ill face or caricature a good one, with a masterly hand; but that was all in his power." Swift is then rebuked for his harsh and rough satire. "Satire, like antimony, if it be used as a medicine must be rendered less corrosive. Yours is often rank poison. But I will allow that you have done some good in your way."

'Ulysses—Circe' gives Lyttelton's style at its best—short simple sentences, bright and graceful. Circe asks the Wise Wanderer why he will not stay in her earthly paradise, and what draws him back to Thrace. Ulysses answers: "The pleasure of virtue; the supreme happiness of doing good. Here I do nothing. My mind is in a palsy; all its faculties are benumbed. I long to return into action—toils and cares fright me not. They are the exercises of my soul; they keep it in health and in vigour. Give me again the fields of Troy rather than these vacant groves. There would I reap the bright harvest of glory; here I am hid, like a coward, from the eyes of mankind. The image of my former self haunts and upbraids me—it even intrudes itself into your presence,

and chides me from your arms." Later, Circe asks him why he prefers the mortal Penelope,<sup>1</sup> his wife, a mortal grown old—to herself, the immortal Circe, of unfading youth. Ulysses answers: "With all your pride of immortal beauty, you are not so powerful a charmer as she. You feel *desire*, and you give it: you have never felt *love* nor can you inspire it. How can I love one who would have degraded me into a beast? Penelope raised me into a hero."

The dialogue between an English duellist called Pushwell, a social parasite, and a North American savage, dwells on the brutality and horror of duelling. A fierce debate on this subject takes place between the two and Mercury has to intervene in the middle of the dispute to restore order. The savage, however, in spite of his barbarous nature, indignantly refuses to sit in the company of the duellist, and threatens to swim over the waters of the Styx rather than travel with the murderer. In 'Christina—Oxenstiern,' the old Chancellor rebukes the Queen of Sweden severely for deserting her throne and her responsibilities in order to pander to her vanity and to mix with the Bohemian poets and artists of Paris and Rome. The dialogue ends with the Queen's self-reproach. "O Vanity, how shortlived are the pleasures thou bestowest! I was your votary: thou wast the god for whom I changed my religion. For thee I forsook my country and my throne. What have I gained? Some puffs of incense from authors—who at best over-rated and praised me. . . . The glory of virtue

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1. Horace Walpole says that in Penelope, Lyttelton portrayed his first wife, Lucy Fortescue. In another dialogue, Pericles is said to stand for Pitt. See Letters of Horace Walpole, Toynbee, Vol. 4, p. 391. May 24, 1760.



is solid and eternal: all others fade away, like a thin vapoury cloud, on which the casual glance of some faint beams of light has superficially imprinted their weak and transient colours."

'Virgil—Horace—Scaliger' is a bright little dialogue where Scaliger's pedantry, harshness and arrogance as a critic, are fully exposed before the great poets, who fool him to their heart's content, aided by the ever-mischievous Mercury. Scaliger receives humbly 'the mortification of truly knowing himself.' The 'longest and ablest colloquy,' however, as Austin Dobson calls it, is the dialogue between Pope and Boileau. The literary criticism in the piece is exceptionally good, and discloses advanced views. The appreciations of Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope, of Voltaire and Molière, are happily inspired and well expressed. Pope and Boileau begin by complimenting each other on their accomplishments, and then turn to self-examination. Pope is made to regret his violent attacks on rival authors in his satires. There is a just reflection on the 'Dunciad': "We both were too irritable and too easily hurt by offences even from the lowest of men. The keen edge of our wit was frequently turned against those whom it was more a shame to contend with than an honour to vanquish." Boileau tries to excuse himself by saying, "In panegyric and satire, moderation is insipid," and Pope supports him. "Moderation is a *cold unpoetical virtue*." Pope is also made to say, "Our poems were polished to the utmost degree of perfection, correctness: yet without losing their fire, or the agreeable appearance of freedom and ease."

Boileau then compliments Pope on his 'Homer,' 'the most spirited, the most poetical, the most elegant

and the most pleasing translation of an ancient poem,' but all the same, he says, "A great poet, so tied down to a tedious translation, is a *Columbus chained to his oar*." The implied praise is not without exaggeration, but the remark in general is true. Boileau is more querulous over the edition of Shakespeare: "The office of an editor was below you. Would anybody think of employing a Raphael to clean an old picture?" To this, Pope answers that he was prompted by zeal for the honour of Shakespeare: "If you knew all his beauties as well as I, you would not wonder at this zeal. No other author had ever so copious, so bold, so *creative*, an imagination, with so perfect a knowledge of the passions, the humours and the sentiments of mankind. He painted all characters, from kings down to peasants, with equal truth and equal force. If human nature were destroyed, and no monument left of it except his works, other beings might know what man was from those writings."<sup>1</sup>

Pope considers the strange mixture of 'tragedy, comedy and farce in the same play' quite inexcusable. But 'In the principal points, in the power of exciting terror and pity, or raising laughter in an audience, none has yet excelled him, and very few have equalled.' Pope admits the superiority of Molière, in the latter's own type of comedy, to Shakespeare. Boileau then remarks, "This, Mr. Pope, is a great deal for an Englishman to acknow-

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1. Prof. D. N. Smith remarks that in this piece of criticism, Lyttelton "showed his intimacy with Pope's opinion," as expressed in the Preface to the Edition of Shakespeare, 1725. See D. N. Smith, 'Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare,' 1903, p. xxxiv.

ledge. A veneration for Shakespeare seems to be a part of your national religion, and the only part in which even your men of sense are fanatics." To which Pope retorts: "He who can read Shakespeare and be cool enough for all the accuracy of sober criticism, has more of reason than taste." The same is said of Milton. "His genius was, indeed, so vast and sublime that his poem seems beyond the limits of criticism: as his subject is beyond the limits of nature. The bright and excessive blaze of poetical fire, which shines in so many parts of *Paradise Lost*, will hardly permit the dazzled eye to see its faults." Spenser, while he is praised for the force and beauty of some of his images and descriptions, equal to any in Tasso, Ariosto and Dante, is blamed for the allegory, which is continued throughout the work, and fatigues the mind. Lyttelton sums him up well: "To be now and then in Fairyland, among imaginary beings, is a pleasing variety: but to be always there is irksome." The criticism of Thomson runs thus: "He painted nature exactly, and with great strength of pencil. His imagination was rich, extensive, and sublime: his diction bold and glowing, but sometimes *obscure* and *affected*. Nor did he always know when to *stop* or what to *reject*. . . . Not only in his plays, but in all his other works, there is the purest *morality*, animated by *piety*, and rendered more touching by the fine and delicate sentiments of a most *tender* and *benevolent heart*."

Voltaire's philosophical freedom of thought and his excesses form the next topic of discussion. Boileau regrets that Voltaire often passed the bounds of liberty. The following dialogue then ensues:

Pope: "Witty writings, when directed to serve

the good ends of virtue and religion, are like the lights hung out in a *pharos*, to guide the mariners safe through dangerous seas: but the brightness of those that are impious or immoral shines only to betray, and to lead men to destruction."

*Boileau*: Has England been free from all seductions of this nature?

*Pope*: No. But the French have the art of rendering vice and impiety more agreeable than the English.

The long discussion on the merits and demerits of French and English authors ends with the plea of Pope for mutual intellectual co-operation between the two nations:

"I would have them (the French) be perpetual competitors with the English in manly wit and substantial learning. But let the competition be friendly. There is nothing which so contracts and debases the mind as national envy. True wit, like true virtue, naturally loves its own image, in whatever place it is found."

'Apicius—Darteneuf' is one of the choicest morsels in Lyttelton's 'Dialogues,' for its delicate humour and satire, and its pleasing description of two *gourmets* in Hades, avidly discussing the little details of luxury, high life and the culinary art. Darteneuf<sup>1</sup> sets the ball rolling. "Alas, poor Apicius!<sup>2</sup> I pity thee from my heart, for not having lived in my age and my country. How many good dishes unknown at Rome in thy days have I feasted upon in

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1. 'Each mortal has his pleasure; none deny,  
Scarsdale his bottle, Darty his Ham-pie.'—Thus, Pope.

2. M. Gavius Apicius—the celebrated Roman epicure who lived under Tiberius.

England!" Apicius haughtily responds, 'Keep your pity for yourself,' and cites his *lupus marinus* and *muraena*. With the latter, Darteneuf compares his 'delicate Severn lamprey.' He then asserts that he has eaten the best oysters of Britain. Apicius, not to be outdone, boasts that he had oysters from Sandwich at dinner even in Rome. The Englishman gives a smart reply: "They could not be fresh: they were good for nothing there. You should have come to Sandwich to eat them. It is a shame for you that you did not. An epicure talk of danger when he is in search of a dainty! Did not Leander swim over the Hellespont in a tempest, to get his mistress? And what is a wench to a barrel of oysters?"

Later, Apicius informs his friend proudly that nothing could beat the luxury of Lucullus, and that even Æsop spent six thousand sesterces over a single dish. Darteneuf exclaims: "If I had known this when alive, I should have hanged myself for vexation that I did not live in those days." Apicius chimes in, "Well you might, well you might. You don't know what eating is. You could never know it." And when the Roman tells his friend that Æsop's dish, for which he paid such a heavy price, was chiefly of singing-birds, Darteneuf is driven to swearing. "Of *singing-birds*! Choke him!" Darteneuf, however, is not to be beaten at his forte, the art of living well. He speaks contemptuously of the Roman custom of slaves *reading* to their master at supper, and infers therefrom that the food was not quite up to the mark. "When I was at the table, I neither heard, nor saw, nor spoke: I only tasted."

When the topic of the turtle as a delicacy enters into their discussion, both the gourmands are keenly

vexed that they never tasted it in their lives. Darteneuf laments with dire grief: "Alas, how imperfect is human felicity! I lived in an age when the *noble science of eating* was supposed to have been carried to its highest perfection in England and France. And yet a *turtle feast* is a novelty to me!" "Would it be impossible," he seriously asks his friend, "do you think, to obtain leave from Pluto for going back for one day to my own table at London, just to taste of that food?" Unhappily Mercury intervenes at this stage, and rebukes the two ghosts for their never-ending reminiscences of the palate. The dialogue ends with a fitting sentiment from Apicius:

"It is a sad thing not to know what *good living* is till after one is dead."

The 'Dialogues of the Dead' raised protests from two different quarters. Voltaire indignantly complained of his having been called an exile, in the dialogue between Pope and Boileau where they discuss French and English writers. The conversation turns on Voltaire, and Pope says:

"Voltaire is, I hear, returned from Berlin to the Territory of Geneva. It does great honour to Switzerland, but not much to France, that the finest wit she has left to boast of should choose a country-house at the foot of the Alps, rather than Paris, or any villa in the neighbourhood of that city, for the Retreat of his Age."

Boileau then remarks:

"I am told that in France he did not use his wit with so much discretion as I did with mine. And even his exile, I fear, has not taught him enough to curb its excesses."

This is followed by a splendid tribute to the genius of Voltaire, but the French poet in his retreat Ferney, took great exception to Lyttelton's calling him an 'Exile.' Early in 1761 he wrote to Lyttelton the following letter of protest:

My Lord,

I have read the ingenious Dialogues of the Dead. I find "that I am an exile, and guilty of some excess in writing." I am obliged (and perhaps for the honour of my country) to say I am no exile, because I have not committed the excess the author in the dialogues imputes to me.

Nobody raised his voice higher than mine in favour of the rights of mankind; yet I have not succeeded even in that virtue. I am not settled in Switzerland. . . . . I live in my own land in France.<sup>1</sup> If I was an exile, I had not obtained from my court many a passport for English noblemen. . .

As to religion, I think and I hope he thinks with me, that God is neither a Presbyterian, nor a Lutheran, nor of the Low Church nor of the High Church; but God is the Father of all mankind, the Father of the noble author and mine.

I am, with respect, etc.,

VOLTAIRE,

Gentleman of the King's Chamber,  
At my Castle of Ferney in Burgundy."

The 'Gentleman's Magazine' for February, 1761, after printing this letter, says properly enough: There cannot be a better comment on the above

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1. Voltaire had purchased land on both sides of the Swiss frontier; so what he wrote is technically true. But it is an open fact that Voltaire was practically banished from Paris, and would have never been allowed to visit that city.

letter than the following passage from Voltaire himself:

"Mr. Congreve had one defect, which was his entertaining too mean an idea of his first profession, that of a writer. . . . He hinted to me that I should visit him on no other foot than that of a gentleman.

I answered that had he been so unfortunate as to be a mere gentleman, I should never have come to see him, and I was very much disgusted at so unseasonable a piece of vanity." "

Lyttelton hastened to reply that he was sorry that he had been guilty of "an error in calling his retirement an *exile*," and promised to correct it in the next edition. Voltaire had made mention in his letter of the privileges the King of France had bestowed on him. Lyttelton wrote:

"*To do you justice* is a duty I owe truth and myself; and you have a much better title to it than from the Passports you say you have procured for English noblemen; you are entitled to it, Sir, by the high sentiments of respect I have for you, which are not paid to the privileges you tell me your King has confirmed to your lands, but to the noble talents God has given you, and the superior rank you hold in the Republic of Letters. The favours done you by your Sovereign are an honour to him, but add little lustre to the name of Voltaire.

I entirely agree with you that 'God is the Father of all mankind' and should think it blasphemy to confine his goodness to a sect, nor do I believe that any of his creatures are good in his

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1. The Gentleman's Magazine: February, 1761, pp.54-55.  
Voltaire: Letters concerning the English Nation, 1733, p. 188.



sight, if they do not extend their benevolence to all his creation. These opinions I rejoice to see in your works, and *shall be glad to be convinced* that the liberty of your thoughts and your pen upon such subjects of philosophy and religion never exceed the bounds of this generous principle, which is authorised by revelation as much as by reason; or that you disapprove in your hours of sober reflection any irregular sallies of fancy which cannot be justified, though they may be *excused* by the vivacity and fire of a great genius."<sup>1</sup>

The correspondence was duly printed in the London journals, and excited much comment. It was generally felt that Lyttelton had come off the better, with his generous compliance with Voltaire's wishes and the smart retort in his reply. Horace Walpole wrote to Sir H. Mann, on March 3rd, 1761: "Voltaire has been charmingly absurd. He who laughed at Congreve for despising the rank of author and affecting the gentleman, set out post for a hovel he has in France, to write from thence, and style himself *Gentleman of the Bed Chamber*, to Lord Lyttelton, who in his 'Dialogues of the Dead' had called him an exile. He writes in English, and not a sentence is tolerable English. The answer is very civil and sensible."<sup>2</sup>

Not content with Lyttelton's reply, Voltaire wrote again, on 10th February, 1761, a letter in French requesting the insertion of an apology in the later editions of the book. "Je ne peux vous remercier de ma main, etate malade; mais je ne suis pas moins sensible à tout ce que vous me faites

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1. The Gentleman's Magazine, February, 1761.

2. Toynbee: Vol. 5, p. 30.

l'honneur demander," he began, and then explained how it was a fact that he had secured passports for 'Mr. Fox's son and Mr. Campbell's family.' "C'est pour moi un devoir and un plaisir, de rendre service à tout gentilhomme de votre nation." He then requested Lyttelton to print at the end of the book, as well as in all the public papers the following paragraph:

"On s'est trompé a la page 134, des Dialogues, en disant, que M. de Voltaire était banni de France pour ses écrits. Il demeure en France dans le comte de Tournay, dont il est Seigneur. C'est un terre libre en Bourgagne dans le voisinage de Genève; Il n'a point été exile."

In the later editions, Lyttelton dropped the passage which had hurt Voltaire and touched his sensitiveness. Soon after, they were friends again, and there is an apparently unintelligible letter which Voltaire wrote to him in July 1761,<sup>2</sup> but whose object was to secure Lyttelton as a subscriber to the edition of Corneille which Voltaire was preparing at the time. "My esteem for you is so great," wrote the famous Frenchman, "that I presume the name of Corneille shall be honoured with your name. I dare say such an atonement, for the little displeasure you had caused me, is a favour which I will ressent<sup>3</sup> a great deal more than my little pain."

The other objection came from the Methodists. John Wesley took exception to Mercury's speech referring to 'The Tale of a Tub' in 'Addison—Swift.' "But Martin (Luther), they tell me, has lately

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1. Gentleman's Magazine, 1762, May.

2. Phillimore: p. 558.

3. Evidently there is a mistake in 'ressent.'

spawned a strange brood of Methodists, Moravians, and Hutchinsonians, who are madder than ever Jack was in his worst days." Wesley, while he 'could heartily subscribe to a greater part' of the 'ingenious book,' could not naturally take the reflection on the Methodists as a trifling speech put in Mercury's mouth, rather than as Lyttelton's personal opinion. "I would ask any one who knows what good breeding means, is this language fit for a nobleman or a porter? But let the language be as it may, is the sentiment just? . . . . Why should a good-natured and a thinking man thus condemn whole bodies of men by the lump? In this, I can read neither the gentleman, the scholar, nor the Christian. . . . " "What does he know of them (Methodists) but from the caricatures drawn by Bishop Lavington or Bishop Warburton?"<sup>1</sup> Wesley was certainly justified in his protest, but Lyttelton had undoubtedly an excuse that it was just a chaffing speech from Mercury, and that Mercury's abuse was not necessarily his own. Moreover, Lyttelton himself was rather partial to the Methodists. Horace Walpole, writing about them in 1749, says: "This sect increases as fast as almost ever any religious nonsense did. Lady Fanny Shirley has chosen this way of bestowing the dregs of her beauty and Mr. Lyttelton is very near making the same sacrifice of all those various characters that he has worn."<sup>2</sup> Apart from this attack upon Lyttelton, Wesley admired his works very much. Writing in 1776, he remarks: "I looked over a volume of Lord Lyttelton's works.

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1. John Wesley's Journal, ed. Curnock, 1903, Vol. 3, p. 388.

2. Letters: Toynbee, Vol. 2, p. 374.

He is really a fine writer, both in verse and prose, though he believed the Bible: yea, and feared God."

The 'Dialogues of the Dead' are, on the whole, even to-day enjoyable and readable. Some of them are undoubtedly dull, as the personages Lyttelton introduced are more ancient and vague than they were in his own day. The rest are full of life and spirit, they are sensible and well written, the style is uniformly good, and the opinions sound. The general scholarship and classical learning of the writer are also well employed. On the other hand, the dramatic element, which the author strove for, is not often present. The dialogues, moreover, have not the fine delicacy of sentiment, the imagination, and the classic beauty of the 'Imaginary Conversations' of Landor.<sup>2</sup> Horace Walpole spitefully attacked them, calling them 'Dead Dialogues.' Johnson grudgingly admits that 'they were very eagerly read,' and at the same time remarks queerly that they were 'the production rather of leisure than of study, rather effusions than compositions.' The answer to the learned Doctor is best given by Austin Dobson. "What particular dispraise," he writes, "Johnson intended to convey by saying that the

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1. Wesley's Journal, Vol. 4, p. 64.

2. It may be well to point out, in this connection, that Landor owed little to his predecessors, even to those just before him, Langhorne, Hurd, and Lyttelton. Sidney Colvin, in his biography of Landor, says: "It is needless to say that he did not closely follow, much less imitate any of his predecessors. For fear of being caught echoing either the matter or the manner of any other writer, he used to abstain altogether from reading before he himself began to compose. 'I do not wish,' he said, 'the children of my brain to imitate the gait or learn any tricks of others!'"

dialogues are 'rather effusions than compositions,' must depend on some subtle distinction between pouring and mixing which escapes us; but they are certainly fluent and clear, and could only have been 'effused' by a writer of exceptional taste and scholarship." Of Lyttelton's prose works, there can be little doubt that the 'Dialogues of the Dead' is his best production, and one well worth a reprint.

Just about the time the 'Dialogues of the Dead' was published, Lyttelton came to be acquainted with Sterne. When 'Tristram Shandy' came out early in 1760, it created a sensation and took the public by storm. Sterne came to London in March of that year, and sponsored by his enthusiastic admirers, Garrick and Warburton, he became, from the moment of his arrival, the centre of homage from all quarters. Lyttelton, amongst many others of rank and fame, came to visit the famous Yorkshireman in his fashionable apartments near the *Tully's Head*, Dodsley's bookshop. "From morning to night," Sterne wrote to his 'dear, dear Kitty,' Mlle. Fourmantelle, "my Lodgings, which, by the way, are the genteest in Town, are full of the greatest company. I dined these two days with two ladies of the Bedchamber; then with Lord Rockingham, Lord Edgecomb, Lord Winchelsea, Lord Littleton, a Bishop, etc.,—I assure you, my Kitty, that Tristram is the Fashion."<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton was evidently a devoted admirer of 'Tristram.' Professor Wilbur Cross writes: "Two of the men of rank who overwhelmed the author with attentions were patrons of literature,

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1. Melville (Lewis): Lawrence Sterne, Vol. I, p. 251.

Chesterfield . . . . . and Lyttelton . . . . ."<sup>1</sup> It is further suggested that Lord Bathurst's patronage came to Sterne through Lyttelton and Chesterfield. It is interesting to note in this connection that Mary Macartney, a great friend of the novelist who used to write intimate letters to her, married in 1761 William Lyttelton, the Governor of Jamaica and the youngest brother of George Lyttelton.

In 1763, Lyttelton became the patron of William Julius Mickle, the Scottish poet, under curious circumstances. Born in 1735, Mickle received a brief education and became the chief partner in his father's brewery firm at an early age. He took to the study of literature soon after, and became so greatly interested in poetry, that he neglected his business, and allowed it to suffer. In January, 1763, Mickle wrote a letter to Lyttelton, under the assumed name of William More, begging his Lordship's opinion of his poem (' Providence '), which was ' the work of a young man, friendless and unknown.' He requested that the answer might be left at Seagoe's coffee-house, Holborn. Before he received a reply, Mickle's affairs became so deranged, that he left Edinburgh suddenly, and reached London in May of that year, penniless and in irremediable distress. In July, Mickle received two cheerful letters from Lyttelton, assuring him that he had great talent, but that his poem needed many alterations.

Some time later, Mickle revealed his true name to Lyttelton, and desired an interview with his patron, which was granted and took place on 12th February, 1764. Mickle was treated politely and affably.

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1. Prof. W. L. Cross: " The Life and Times of Laurence Sterne."

Soon, however, Lyttelton's insistence on various corrections in his poems, and his inability to procure the young man a post either in Jamaica or the East India Company, led Mickle to believe that he had been badly treated, and that the many hopes he was given were not substantial. Lyttelton was not much to be blamed, because he had done all he could; he had written to his brother William in Jamaica, but the latter had no powers of appointment. Lyttelton did not know the East India Directors sufficiently well to procure Mickle a post in the Company. There can be no doubt, however, that Mickle was very much irritated by Lyttelton's myriad alterations in the poem 'Providence,' which was returned to him heavily marked and blotted.

Though disappointed, Mickle was 'yet sensible of the benefits he had received from his instruction,' and 'spoke always with great deference of Lyttelton's abilities.'<sup>1</sup> The following year, Mickle obtained a post as Corrector to the Clarendon Press at Oxford; whether through Lyttelton's intervention or otherwise, it is not known.

It will not be out of place, at this stage, to consider other instances of Lyttelton's patronage, among the minor poets and writers. James Cawthorn dedicated an 'ethic epistle' to him in 1749, entitled 'The Vanity of Human Enjoyments.'<sup>2</sup> Cawthorn must have been a familiar friend, for he calls his patron 'My Lyttelton.' Dr. John Carr dedicated

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1. See 'The Poetical Works of W. J. Mickle, with a new Life of the Author by Rev. John Sim,' 1806, as well as the Life of Mickle in Chalmers' 'Works of the English Poets,' Vol. 17, pp. 505-507, and Phillimore: *Memoirs of Lyttelton*, pp. 580-88.

2. See Chalmers: *English Poets*, 1810, Vol. 14, p. 254.

his translation of the 'Dialogues of Lucian' to the memory of Lyttelton, after his death,<sup>1</sup> and Dr. E. Warren addressed to him the 'Remarks on the History of Fingal.'<sup>2</sup> Stillingfleet's 'Miscellaneous Tracts' was another book which resulted from Lyttelton's patronage.<sup>3</sup> Mallet obtained a pension from the Prince of Wales about 1738, owing to Lyttelton's efforts, and was, four years later, appointed Under-Secretary to the Prince.<sup>4</sup> Hammond was well acquainted with Lyttelton, as he was an Equerry to the Prince's household during the time the latter was his Private Secretary.<sup>5</sup> Joseph Warton was another friend, whom Lyttelton appointed as his Chaplain, when he was elevated to the peerage in 1756.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, 1812-15, Vol. 3, p. 171. J. Carr, "Dialogues of Lucian," 2nd Edition, 1779.

2. 1762. Nichols: *Ibid*, Vol. 2, p. 416.

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4. Austin Dobson writes that Mallet seems to have repaid this service "by loosing upon Lyttelton as a suitor his excitable and vindictive compatriot, Mr. Tobias George Smollett." *National Review*, June, 1910, p. 609.

5. Phillimore: p. 113.

6. Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, Vol. 6, p. 159, also J. Wooll's *Memoirs of J. Warton*, 1806, p. 242.

7. Elwin and Courthope: *Pope's Works*, Vol. 9, p. 182, 13th June, 1741.

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in the little intervals of Parliamentary recesses, Lyttelton busied himself with the work. It was a task of love enthusiastically undertaken. The publication of the book was attended by curious circumstances. Lyttelton had begun to print it in 1755, but the first three volumes came out only in 1767, and even then the work was not complete. Johnson relates well the story of the publication. "The whole work was printed twice over, a great part of it three times, and many sheets four or five times. The booksellers paid for the first impressions: but the charges and repeated operations of the press were at the expense of the author, whose ambitious accuracy is known to have cost him at least a thousand pounds. . . . Andrew Reid, a man not without considerable abilities, undertook to persuade Lyttelton . . . that he was master of the secret of punctuation: and as fear begets credulity, he was employed, I know not at what price, to point the pages of 'Henry II.' The book was at last pointed and printed and sent out into the world. Lyttelton took money for his copy,<sup>1</sup> of which, when he had paid the Pointer, he probably gave the rest away: for he was very liberal to the indigent." Reid was sometime after 'either dead or discarded.' Lyttelton appointed one Dr. Saunders to take his place, who was originally a comb-maker. "Something uncommon was probably expected, and something uncommon was at last done: for to the Doctor's edition is appended, what the world had hardly seen before, a list<sup>2</sup> of errors in nineteen pages."

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The completed book, however, at last appeared in 1771, after the first three volumes had run into three editions. There were further editions in 1773 and 1777, and one was printed in Dublin in 1768. With regard to the last, Lyttelton wrote a number of letters to his publisher, probably one G. Faulkner, seven of which, in the original manuscript, have been preserved in the Library of the Trinity College in Dublin. They have not yet been printed, and three of them are included in the appendix. Two of the letters are important in that Lyttelton expressly denies in them the authorship of the 'History of England' written and published by Goldsmith in 1764, which was for a long time attributed to him. He, however, makes the mistake of assigning them to Lord Cork.

The 'History of Henry II' is a long account in four volumes of a single reign and a single king, with a short introduction concerned with the earlier period. It possesses no literary distinction: its style, though not displeasing, is uniformly unimposing. There is, however, little doubt that considered as pure history, the result of painstaking research and zeal for accuracy, it is worthily done. In a letter to Dr. Warton, of 15th August, 1767, Lyttelton explains why in the effort to be correct, it was difficult for him to escape dulness. "I could have made it more amusing if I would have treated it more superficially; but if the historic muse will search for truth among the ruins and cells of Gothic antiquity, some dust and cobwebs will stick to her, and she will not look so fine as if she had been only gathering flowers or straining cream." It was natural, therefore, that Walpole, while praising the book inordinately in its

early days, should sneer later that 'it raises no more passions than Burn's *Justice of the Peace*:'<sup>1</sup> that Gibbon should call the book 'that voluminous work, in which sense and learning are not illuminated by a single ray of genius.'<sup>2</sup> Hume hated his 'Whiggery and Piety,' 'qualities,' he remarks sarcastically, 'so useful both in this world and the next.' To Johnson, as has been shown before, the book savoured of 'the vilest Whiggism' and was equally repugnant. Other critics looked upon it more dispassionately. Southey called it 'a learned and honest book';<sup>3</sup> which was just what it was meant to be. Gibbon, in his actual review, of nearly thirty pages written in French, was more just than in the 'Autobiography.' He compared him to Hume and Robertson and said: "My Lord Lyttelton ne doit point pretendre à la gloire de ces hommes de genie, mais il lui reste les qualitiés, d'un bon citoyen, d'un savant tres éclairé, d'un écrivain exact et impartial, et c'est avec plaisir, que nous les lui accordons." He further wrote: "My Lord Lyttelton, s'étoit engagé à faire connoître le siècle de Henri II aussi bien que le Monarque lui-même. Il a rempli cette promesse avec une abondance qui ne laisse rien à desirer."<sup>4</sup> Hallam quoted the book often in his work, and called it 'a full and sober account of the time.' Thus the usefulness,

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1. Also, 'Most circumspect and most insipid.' Toynbee, Vol. 2, p. 409. He was more cruel when he wrote: "Have you waded through, or into Lyttelton? How dull one may be, if one will but take pains for six or seven and twenty years together." Toynbee, Vol. 7, p. 122.

2. *Autobiography of Gibbon*. World's Classics, p. 167.

3. Southey's 'Life and Correspondence,' 1849-50, by C. C. Southey. Letter of August 5, 1805, to J. May.

4. *Memoires Litteraires de le Grande Bretagne*, 1767-68, pp. 1-30.

accuracy, and value of the researches Lyttelton made are admitted now, and would appeal to the modern historian, in an age when specialization is so keenly sought after. To the general reader, it can have no interest at all; the period is too remote, and the volumes too bulky to induce any one to read the 'History of Henry II.'

The latter years of Lyttelton's life were clouded by anxiety for his son Thomas. During the Scotch tour, Lyttelton had written about him: "Wherever he went he won all hearts, and you may believe mine beat with joy at the sight of his conquests. My only fear is that hereafter he may please the ladies too much." Lyttelton's premonitions came only too true, when he found his son contracting an engagement, while still at Oxford in 1763, with the daughter of a General Warburton, without telling his father about it. As soon as this indiscretion became known, he was sent abroad for two years, while the arrangements for a settlement were being made. On the continent, Thomas recklessly indulged himself in all the fashionable vices, and the engagement was consequently broken off. In Italy, Thomas had many escapades, and was 'detained by the Circes and Syrens of the Coast about Genoa.'<sup>1</sup>

Lyttelton forgave his son, but on a second tour in Italy Thomas behaved worse than ever. He grew licentious and spendthrift to such an extent, that a complete rupture became inevitable between him and the family. In 1771, however, Thomas apparently repented, and Lyttelton, who loved him very much,

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1. 'Mrs. Montagu—Queen of the Blues'—Climenson, E. J. and Blunt, R., 1923, Vol. 1, p. 121.

took him back into his favour.<sup>1</sup> The next year, with his father's approval, he married a Mrs. Peach, widow of Joseph Peach, once Governor of Calcutta.

Except for the constant trouble given by Thomas, Lyttelton led a fairly happy life at Hagley. Loved and respected by all as the 'Good Lord Lyttelton,' and busy with the task that gave him great pleasure, the writing of the 'History of Henry II,' the days

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1. Note—Thomas Lyttelton succeeded his father as the second Lord, in August, 1773, on the latter's death. He proved to be a very good speaker in the Lords, and entered with zest into all the politics of his day. In private life, however, in spite of his marriage, he continued to live as dissolutely as ever. His libertinism was unusual at that age, with his rank and position. He got an unenviable place in Combe's 'Diaboliad,' and came to be known as the 'Wicked Lord Lyttelton,' in contradistinction to his father, who was known all through England, as 'the Good Lord Lyttelton,' for his honesty and irreproachable character. Thomas, the second Lord, was successful in his political career, was sworn to the Privy Council at the age of thirty in 1775, and appointed the same year Chief Justice of the Eyre for the Northern Counties. He was a clever gambler, and is said to have made more than thirty thousand pounds at the gaming table. He is one of the numerous persons who were supposed at various times to be the authors of "The Letters of Junius." He died in 1779 at the early age of thirty-five, from nervous weakness caused by reckless and dissolute living. The death took place under very curious circumstances, and provided for a number of years a most sensational ghost-story, frequently narrated and commented upon in journals. Three days before his death, Lyttelton dreamed, "That a bird flew into the room, and changed into a woman who warned him that he had not three days to live." On the third day, an hour before midnight, shortly after getting into bed, the young Lord had a sudden fit, and died instantaneously. An interesting sequel was that one Andrews, a friend of the Lord, declared "that on the night, about the hour of Lyttelton's death, he dreamt that Lyttelton came to him and told him 'all was over.'" (See Mrs. Piozzi's Autobiography, and the accounts in the London Magazine, the Scots' Magazine, and St. James's Chronicle for December, 1779).



passed easily at Hagley Hall. Lyttelton's hospitality brought numerous friends every summer to Hagley, and entertainments were often given in their honour with elaborate preparation. Mrs. Montagu writes to her sister in 1762 about her visit to Hagley:

"Besides these soft beauties, it has a magnificent prospect of distant mountains, and hills shaded with wood. The house is magnificent and elegant; we had several agreeable entertainments of the Park, and adapted to the scenes. In some places the French horns reverberated from hill to hill. In the shady parts, near the cascades, the soft music was concealed and seemed to come from the unseen genius of the wood. We were all in great spirits and enjoyed the amusements prepared for us."<sup>1</sup> Countess Temple, writing to Lady Brown in July, 1768, gives a detailed description of the reception she had at Hagley.

"At Lord Lyttelton's Queen Mab appeared to me in a very romantic spot in the Park. This remarkable event was preceded by soft music from the clouds. Queen Mab was properly dressed in green, with a very long train supported by little fairies, and two little boys, dressed in white, walked on each side with baskets of flowers in their hands. Her head was ornamented with flowers and she held a magic wand. She made me a pretty compliment upon my coming to Hagley, and presented me with a basket of flowers taken from one of the little white elves, at the bottom of which I found some verses," etc.<sup>2</sup>

In June 1773, Lyttelton invited Pitt, now Lord Chatham, to come to Hagley for the summer. They

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1. Dr. Doran: *A Lady of the Last Century*, p. 132.

2. Grenville Papers: Vol. 4, pp. 323-325.

were now great friends again, and were on the best of terms. Chatham could not accept the invitation; "a necessary arrangement," he wrote, "will hardly admit of gratifying my ardent wishes, to wait on your Lordship in Worcestershire, once more to enjoy with you the well-known beauties of *Old Hagley*, as well as to admire the charms and glories of the new." "My only resource," he continued, "is to hope that next summer may repay my loss in this. You cannot but smile, my dear Lord, at plans of future excursions in your coeval in *years* and much your senior in *infirmities*; but ideas of good to come are the inexhaustible consolations of life, and I will indulge in the best I may this pleasing vision."<sup>1</sup> Lyttelton, however, with all his apparent good health, proved to be the 'senior' in infirmities. Two months after Pitt's letter had reached him, in the middle of August, Lyttelton was seized with a sudden and violent internal disorder. It was so sudden, indeed, that "an urgent express was sent to his son in Germany, for his return."<sup>2</sup> His daughter-in-law incessantly watched by his pillow during the illness, but all efforts were useless. The symptoms grew worse and worse; on Tuesday, the 22nd August, 1773, Lyttelton breathed his last, after ten days' continual suffering and long want of sleep. There is a very affecting account of the fatal illness and last moments of Lyttelton, sent to Mrs. Montagu by Dr. Johnstone, the physician who attended him.

"On Sunday evening the symptoms of his Lordship's disorder, which for a week past had alarmed us, put on a fatal appearance, and his

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1. Phillimore: p. 785.

2. The "Gentleman's Magazine" for August, 1773, p. 414.

Lordship believed himself to be a dying man. From this time, he suffered by restlessness rather than pain, and though his nerves were apparently much fluttered, his mental faculties seemed stronger when he was thoroughly awake. His Lordship's bilious and hepatic complaints seemed alone not equal to the expected mournful event; his long want of sleep, whether the consequence of the irritation in the bowels, or which is more probable, of causes of a different kind, accounts for his loss of strength and for his death very sufficiently. Though his Lordship wished his approaching dissolution not to be lingering, he waited for it with resignation. He said, 'It is folly, a keeping me in misery, now to attempt to prolong life'; yet he was easily persuaded, for the satisfaction of others, to do or take anything thought proper for him. On Saturday he had been remarkably better, and we were not without some hopes of his recovery. On Sunday about eleven in the forenoon, his Lordship sent for me, and said he felt a great melancholy,<sup>1</sup> and wished to have a little conversation with me in order to divert it. He then proceeded to open the fountain of that heart whence goodness had so long flowed, as from a copious spring. 'Doctor,' he said, 'you shall be my confessor; when I first set out in the world, I had friends who endeavoured to shake my belief in the Christian religion. I saw difficulties which staggered me, but I kept my mind open to conviction. The evidences and doctrines of Christianity, studied with attention, made me a most firm and persuaded believer of the Christian religion. I have made it

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1. 'A great hurry of spirits' in another account, instead of 'a great melancholy.'

the rule of my life, and it is the ground of my future hopes. I have erred and sinned, but I have repented, and never indulged in any vicious habit. In politics and public life, I have made the public good the rule of my conduct. I never gave counsels which I did not, at the time, think the best. I have seen that I was sometimes in the wrong, but I did not err designedly. I have endeavoured in private life, to do all the good in my power, and never for a moment could indulge malicious or unjust designs upon any person whatever.' At another time he said, 'I must leave my soul in the same state it was in before this illness; I find this a very inconvenient time for solicitude about anything.' On the evening when the symptoms of death came on him, he said, 'I shall die; but it will not be your fault.' When Lord and Lady Valentia<sup>1</sup> came to see his Lordship, he gave them his solemn benediction, and said, 'Be good, be virtuous, my Lord. You must come to this.' Thus he continued his dying benediction to all round him. On Monday morning, a lucid interval gave some small hopes, but those vanished in the evening; and he continued dying, but with very little uneasiness, till Tuesday morning, August 22nd, when between seven and eight o'clock he expired almost without a groan."<sup>2</sup>

Lyttelton's death caused great grief amidst his numerous friends and admirers. Mrs. Montagu was "greatly affected at the death of our great and good

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1. His daughter and son-in-law.

2. From the *Gentleman's Magazine*, December, 1773, p. 604. See also 'Original Letters' edited by Miss Warner, where there is a slightly different, but essentially same account. J. Chambers: *Biographical Illustrations*. 'Life of Lyttelton' by Johnson.

friend Lord Lyttelton." "The loss to his friends and to society is unspeakable, and irreparable," wrote the poet Beattie, author of 'The Minstrel,' to the Earl of Kinnoull.<sup>1</sup> "His Lordship died, as he lived, a most illustrious example of every Christian virtue. . . . The devout and cheerful resignation that occupied his mind during his illness, did not forsake him in the moment of dissolution, but fixed a smile on his lifeless countenance. . . Since I came last to town, I have had the honour and happiness to pass many an hour in his company, and to converse with him on all subjects . . . and I hope I shall be the better, while I live, for what I have seen and what I have heard of Lord Lyttelton." Chatham also sent a sincere letter of condolence to Lyttelton's son and successor, on hearing "the most unexpected, afflicting account of the sad event at Hagley."

The grief of the public at the loss of Lyttelton to the country was well expressed, though perhaps with some exaggeration, in a letter of Mrs. Montagu's to Mrs. Vesey. "I never heard of such lamentation for the loss of any man. Every paper from every town in England is filled with his praises. . . . He was the most humble and gentle of any man I ever knew."<sup>2</sup> From Beaconsfield, Edmund Burke, who had known Lyttelton at Mrs. Montagu's for some while, wrote to that lady a letter of condolence, saying:

"While Lord Lyttelton lived, I am sure that neither Religion, nor Reason, nor natural good temper could have supported him without the sympathy of a mind formed like his own. And surely

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1. Life of Beattie—Forbes, p. 262.

2. 'Mrs. Montagu, Queen of the Blues,' E. J. Climençon and R. Blunt, 1923, Vol. 1.

. . . . your wisdom, your cheerfulness, and your counsels were never better exterted than in rendering the last years of a learned and good man tolerable, when nothing could make them happy.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Burke and all here who loved Lord Lyttelton as we did, sympathise heartily with you.”<sup>2</sup> That his son’s conduct rendered the last years of Lyttelton’s life very unhappy, is also shown by a letter from Johnson to Mrs. Thrale written on November 3, 1773: “ I first saw the account of Lord Littelton’s (sic) death in the Isle of Raarsa and suspected that it had been hastened by the vexation which his son has given him. We shall now see what the young man will do, when he is left to himself.”<sup>3</sup>

Lyttelton was buried at the Hagley Parish Church. Mrs. Thrale notes in her “ Journal of the Town in Wales with Dr. Johnson,” 1774, that Lyttelton had desired to be buried at Hagley, with the remains of his first wife, Lucy, who had been buried at Over Arley in 1747. “ The late lord, it seems, had brought Lucy’s corpse from some other consecrated ground (Over Arley) when his death approached, and desired she might be put in the same hearse and the same grave with him. When one hears of such tenderness, one is inclined to say that he who never loved never was happy. His finest feelings lay till they rusted.”<sup>4</sup>

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1. This is a reference to the unhappiness Lyttelton’s son caused in the family by his misconduct.

2. ‘ Mrs. Montagu, Queen of the Blues,’ Climenson and Blunt, Vol. 1, p. 276.

3. Johnson’s Letters, ed. G. B. Hill, Vol. 1, p. 288. ‘ Raarsa ’ is Raasay.

4. Mrs. Thrale’s ‘ Journal of the Tour in Wales ’ in A. M. Broadley’s ‘ Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale,’ p. 158.

Hugh Miller who visited the Parish Church at Hagley seventy years later, dwells on the taste and elegance of the 'sepulchral marbles of Lyttelton.' He then continues: "One straggling ray of sunshine, coloured by the stained glass of a narrow window . . . . fell on a small oblong tablet, the plainest and least considerable in the building and by lighting up its inscription of five short lines, gave to it by one of those fortuitous happinesses in which so much of the poetry of common life consists, the prominence which it deserves. It briefly intimates that it was placed there, in its 'naked unadornedness,' 'at the particular desire of the Rt. Hon. George, Lord Lyttelton, who died August 22nd, 1773, aged sixty-four.' The poet had willed, like another titled poet of less unclouded reputation that 'his epitaph should be his name alone.' Besides this slab,—so near that they almost touch—there is a marble of great elegance—the monument of the Lady Lucy."¹

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1. Hugh Miller: *First Impressions of England*, 1847, Chap. 7.

## CHAPTER XI

### LYTTELTON: PERSONAL FEATURES AND CHARACTER

#### CONCLUSION

Lyttelton was a tall and remarkably thin man with a weak constitution; so he answered well to the happy description of him in the "Motion": "So long, so lank, so lean and bony." In a later cartoon, he is "a lean Cassius." A serious face and a rather long nose by no means added to the grace of his person. No wonder, his enemies make him out as an ugly person. Lord Hervey writes with exaggeration: "In his figure extremely tall and thin, his face was so ugly, his person so ill-made, and his carriage so awkward, that every feature was a blemish, every limb an encumbrance, and every motion a disgrace; but as disagreeable as his figure was, his voice was still more so, and his address more disagreeable than either."<sup>1</sup> Rockingham says, "He was a pale thin man, with a very plain face, and with a frame so loosely put together that 'every limb was an encumbrance.'"<sup>2</sup> Horace Walpole calls him a "wise moppet" and a "pompous old grandee."<sup>3</sup> In a harsher strain he sneers at Lyttelton—"With the figure of a spectre and the gesticulations of a puppet, he talked heroics through his nose, made declamations

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1. The Hervey Memoirs. Also Grenville Papers: Vol. 1, pp. 13-16.

2. Rockingham Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 204-207.

3. Toynbee Letters: Vol. 7, p. 73 and Vol. 12.



at a visit, and played at cards with scraps of history or sentences of Pindar.”

Lyttelton's physique was indeed a notorious subject for caricature and satire as well. Churchill in his poem, "Independence," gives us a picture of him, which, allowing for gross exaggeration, confirms in many respects the testimony of Rockingham and Hervey:

The first was meagre, flimsy, void of strength,  
 But nature kindly had made up in length  
 What she in breadth had denied: erect  
and proud,  
 A head and shoulders taller than the crowd,  
 He deem'd them pigmies all: loose hung  
his skin  
 O'er his bare bones: his face so very thin,  
 So very narrow, and so much beat out,  
 That physiognomists have made a doubt,  
 Proportion lost, expression quite forgot,  
 Whether it could be call'd a face or not:  
 At end of it, howe'er, unblest'd with beard,  
 Some twenty fathom length of chin appear'd:  
 With legs, which we might well conceive  
that Fate  
 Meant only to support a spider's weight,  
 Firmly he strove to tread and with a stride,  
 Which shew'd at once his weakness and  
his pride,  
 Shaking himself to pieces seem'd to cry,  
 "Observe, good people, how I shake the sky."  
 In his right hand a paper did he hold,  
 On which at large, in characters of gold,

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1. *Memoirs of the Reign of George II*, Vol. 1, pp. 201-202.

Distinct and plain for those who run to see,  
Saint Archibald had wrote L,O,R,D."<sup>1</sup>

' Saint Archibald ' is Archibald Bower, who was Lyttelton's protégé for some time, and the allusion here to Lyttelton is quite clear.

Chesterfield gives a long and fairly just description of Lyttelton's ways and manners, though no doubt, the details may be unreliable. In a letter to his son, the great devotee of social elegance warns him to beware of lapsing into the graceless ways of Lyttelton: " You have often seen, and I have as often made you observe L(yttelton)'s distinguished inattention and awkwardness. Wrapped up like a Laputan in intense thought, and possibly sometimes in no thought at all; which I believe is very often the case of absent people; he does not know his most intimate acquaintance by sight, or answers them as if they were at cross purposes. He leaves his hat in one room, his sword in another, and would leave his shoes in a third, if his buckles, though awry, did not save them. His legs and arms by his awkward arrangement of them, seem to have undergone the *question extraordinaire*; and his head, always hanging upon one or other of his shoulders, seems to have received the first stroke upon a block. I sincerely value and esteem him for his parts,

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1. See " The Poetical Works of Charles Churchill." (Aldine Poets) ed. J. L. Hannay and W. Tooke, 1891, Vol. 1, p 273, ll. 117-138. ' Independence ' was written in 1764. Other references to Lyttelton (sneers at his ' Essay on the Conversion of St. Paul ' and the ' Monody ') can be seen in Vol. 1, pp. 100 and 108.

It is doubtful if Churchill ever knew or met Lyttelton in person.

learning and virtue: but, for the soul of me, I cannot love him in company. This will be universally the case, in common life, of every inattentive, awkward man, let his real merit and knowledge be ever so great.”

In a letter written a few weeks after, Chesterfield again admonishes his son.<sup>2</sup> “Should you be awkward, inattentive and *distract* and happen to meet Mr. Lyttelton at my table, the consequences of that meeting must be fatal; You would run your heads against each other, cut each other’s fingers, instead of your meat, or die by the precipitate infusion of scalding soup.”

There is a third letter, written eighteen months after, on the subject of clumsiness, and as before, Chesterfield describes a dreadful example of a most uncouth man, here called “a respectable Hottentot.” For some time, he was believed to be Johnson, but this has been completely disproved. Lyttelton may have been meant, but he had none of the violence attributed to the “Hottentot,” and Boswell rejects Lyttelton as the person sketched by Chesterfield. In this letter we are told: “His figure without being deformed, seems made to disgrace or ridicule the common structure of the human body. He throws anywhere, but down his throat, whatever he means to drink; and only mangles what he means to carve. Inattentive to all the regards of social life, he mistakes or misplaces everything. He disputes with heat, and indiscriminately. . . . Is it possible to love such a man? No. The utmost that I can

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1. Letter of 22nd September, 1749. Bradshaw: Letters of Chesterfield, Vol. I, p. 245.

2. Chesterfield. Letters: Vol. I, p. 273.

do for him is to consider him a respectable Hottentot."<sup>1</sup>

The only favourable description of Lyttelton we have is from Elizabeth Robinson, later, Mrs. Montagu, who has described him in a letter written to a friend, after seeing him at a Court Assembly at St. James's in 1740.<sup>2</sup> "The young lady observed him in the brilliant scene more closely, and more approvingly than she did the others." "The men were not fine," she wrote, but made an exception in favour of Lyttelton, who was 'rich, not gaudy; costly, but not exprest in fancy.' "In her eyes and to her mind, he was a perfect gentleman and scholar."

There can be no doubt that Lyttelton was often careless and awkward in society and at table. Even when he was young, he used to dream 'reveries' during his meal, and show an undesirable 'sickness of mind.'<sup>3</sup> It is improbable that he ever shook off the absence of mind that characterised him in early youth. Besides Chesterfield, many others noted Lyttelton's inattention. Lord Shelburne calls him 'the most absent creature living,' and then relates an incident which was for some time a perennial topic for gossip in political circles.<sup>4</sup> There have been three or four different versions—by Shelburne, Walpole, Nash, in his "Worcestershire," and William, the younger brother of Lyttelton. Lyttelton's letter to

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1. Chesterfield. Letters: Vol. 1, pp. 407-408. See also pp. 246-49, *ante*.

2. Dr. Doran: A Lady of the Last Century, p. 23. The letters of Mrs. E. Montagu, 1813, ed. M. Montagu, Vol. 1, pp. 126, 132-33. See p. 261, *ante*.

3. Poyntz's letter to his father, Sir Thomas Lyttelton. See pp. 42-43, *ante*.

4. Life of Lord Shelburne: Vol. 1, p. 58.

his father, a private and most important letter dealing with party politics and tactics, was somehow wrongly directed, and was opened at the Post Office. The contents of the letter became known to the King and to Pelham. According to his brother, Lyttelton's letter did not contain any matter discreditable to himself, but his enemies made much of the incident, especially Horace Walpole, and attributed everything to Lyttelton's 'absence of mind.' Whatever it was, it was a gravely indiscreet act on Lyttelton's part.

Nash relates another interesting incident<sup>2</sup> about Lyttelton's 'absence,' which often gave occasion to laughable scrapes. "Fame says that at a visit he made on his marriage, he forgot his wife, and would have gone without her if his servant had not reminded him."

Lyttelton's forgetfulness, combined with his credulity, often led to his deception by servants and persons with whom he had to transact business. He, moreover, neglected these affairs at times when he was too much occupied with his studies and literary pursuits. It is not difficult to imagine how easily Lyttelton fell a victim to "private rapine and literary imposition."<sup>3</sup> His credulity was such indeed, that he continued to stand by and help Archibald Bower, even after he was completely unmasked.

In spite of his awkwardness, absence of mind, and credulity, Lyttelton must have had peculiarly amiable personal qualities.<sup>4</sup> He could not have had

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1. See also 'An Eighteenth Century Correspondence': Dickens and Stanton, 1910, p. 342.

2. Worcestershire: 1782. Part II, Suppl., p. 35.

3. Dodsley's Annual Register, 1776, Part II, pp. 21-24.

4. Carlyle, in his 'History of Frederick the Great,' Vol. 2, pp. 40-44, while quoting Lyttelton's letters to his father written

a large circle of friends in the domain of both politics and literature, without possessing courtesy, urbanity and sincere fellow-feeling. Moreover, his politeness and cordiality were not the polished and half-sincere civilities of Chesterfield; they sprang from a warm and affectionate heart.

Of his benevolence and generosity, little need be said. Fielding's dedication in "Tom Jones" is a splendid testimony to these two great virtues that characterised Lyttelton. To Thomson too, he was not only a considerate patron, but a warm and devoted personal friend. Moore, Mallet, Warton, Bower, and many others received his ungrudging help at one time or other of their lives. Mrs. Wyndham relates an incident that gives us a typical instance of Lyttelton's sense of justice and generosity.<sup>1</sup> His youngest brother William had at one time kept as mistress, a certain Mrs. Durnford, once a servant at Hagley Hall, and the *liaison* had ended in the birth of a son to the woman. Lyttelton was the last to hear about the affair; his brother was in Jamaica and had told him nothing. After some time, scandalous rumours were started, associating Lord Lyttelton, instead of his brother, with Mrs. Durnford. Lyttelton was evidently furious, but made a careful investigation; he found that Mrs. Durnford had remained faithful to his brother, and suffered

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during the European tour, describes him as follows:

"The writer of these letters is a serious, rather long-nosed man, not without intelligence, and of a wholesome, honest nature; who became Lord Lyttelton, first of these Lords, called also the 'Good Lord,' father of the 'Bad'—a man of real worth, who attained to some note in the world."

1. Mrs. Wyndham: Vol. 2, pp. 275-77.

enough for her frailty. Seeing the justice of Mrs. Durnford's case, and his brother's guilt, he wrote her a long letter full of comfort and consolation. "Adieu, poor girl, I pity you from my soul and wish you all consolation; nor shall any be wanting that is in my power to give you unless it should appear you have not told me the truth, which I am far from suspecting, as I always believed you had a very good heart and were a woman of honour and virtue. . . . As we are now assured that my brother is his father (the child's), I will be a father to him also and shew him and you all possible kindness. You may draw upon me at Christmas next for any money you want besides your annuity. God send you better health and comfort every way." To his brother Lyttelton wrote a severe letter, upbraiding him for his negligence and callousness.

Pope had commended Lyttelton in his youth, as "Still true to virtue, and as warm as true." Throughout his life, Lyttelton kept his reputation for honesty and integrity, pure and unsullied. His worst political opponents called him an absurd fool, but their malice did not lead them to challenge his probity and virtue. Le Marchant, who edited Walpole's 'Memoirs of the Reign of George III,' says that his public and private life had been irreproachable.<sup>1</sup> Horace Walpole himself, emphasized Lyttelton's honesty when he wrote with his characteristic sneer. . . . "No man staked his honesty to less purpose, for he was so awkward that honesty was the only quality that seemed natural to him."

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1. Vol. 2, p. 19, 1894 Edition.

Lyttelton's intellectual attainments were considerable. He was no genius, in the essential sense of that oft-used word. He was a good scholar, well versed in the classics of Rome and Greece, as well as those of England. His "Dialogues of the Dead" shows his classical learning; even his Parliamentary speeches are interspersed with reminiscences of happy hours with the ancients. "The History of Henry II" is a tribute to his industry and capacity for research. He possessed powers of imagination, not considerable, yet beyond the average writer of his day, as the "Persian Letters" reveal. His poems are not the weak effusions of a persevering versifier. The "Monody" is an exquisite poem in spite of its flowery imagery in parts. Tenderness, pathos and simplicity mark this personal elegy, and render it noteworthy in the poetry of his period. Lyttelton was a deeply religious man, with very sincere convictions and liberal sentiments. While he believed in full in the truth of the Christian faith, he was no narrow bigot, bound down to creeds and dogmas. He could never brook intolerance or a blind hatred of other faiths, and insistence on the superficial formalities and ceremonials of religion seemed to him the root cause of religious trouble.

In many ways, Lyttelton must have been a unique figure in his social circle. He was a devout admirer of virtue and high thinking; he was sincerely religious in his bent of mind; yet he was not morose or homiletic. He was a sound scholar,<sup>1</sup> and remained

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1. Lyttelton was an ardent collector of books, and he bequeathed to the family a valuable collection at his death. A patron of art too, he collected a few good pictures, and had the ceiling of one room painted by Cipriani. See "The Times," London, for 28th and 29th December, 1925.



one, without adding self-conceit to learning; he was humble, and would talk affably to the poorest author or divine. He moved in a society of county aristocrats, prominent politicians, and peers; yet rarely did he affect the foppishness and frivolity of his circle.

In the "Persian Letters," there is a picture of what an ideal English nobleman should be. Lyttelton comes up to the ideal he drew, in a very great measure:

"An English nobleman should be a strenuous asserter of the privileges of the people, because he is perpetually entrusted with the care of them; and, at the same time, desirous to preserve the just rights of the Crown, because it is the source from which his honour is derived.

. . . . He should have an estate that might set him above dependence; and employ the superfluities, if such there were, not in improving luxury, but in extending charity.

. . . . He should make his dignity easy to his inferiors, by the modesty and simplicity of his behaviour, not even think himself too great for the lowest offices of friendship and humanity.

. . . . He should claim no *privilege* that might exempt him from the strictest rules of justice; and afford *protection*, not to men *obnoxious to the law*, but to every modest virtue and useful art."

In an age and in a society, devoted to scandal and gossip, not too refined or scrupulous about virtue or ethics, and well content with the polished veneer of a Chesterfield's morals, Lyttelton stands a singularly distinguished person, with his unimpeachable character, his literary friendships and his

undeniable talents. The best tribute to his character is the simple one that the affection and respect of the people gave him—a name he well deserved—the ‘Good Lord Lyttelton.’

An estimate of Lyttelton as a writer is necessary before the conclusion of this biography. It is not easy to judge the position of Lyttelton among the English poets. If true poetry can be inspired only by deep emotion and lyrical feeling, by a vivid imagination or a haunting passion for Beauty, Lyttelton has few claims to poetry. It is not true to say of him, as of even greater poets in his age, that he wrote because the urge within for self-expression was irresistible. If, on the other hand, simple grace, harmony and smoothness in verse, a capacity to love Nature in her calm moods, and elegance in epistolary verse, are sufficient to create poetry, Lyttelton must be considered a poet. There are undeniable limitations to this claim; he was imitative, and then, he did not write much poetry. But even the few songs, the ‘Monody,’ and the prologue to Thomson’s ‘Coriolanus,’ entitle him to a worthier consideration than he has had during the last one hundred years. The corrections in Thomson’s ‘Seasons’ also show an exquisite taste, and a simplicity, caught as it were from the classics that Lyttelton loved so well. He is no doubt conventional and imitative; in his early days his master was Pope. Later, perhaps, it was Thomson. He attempted different kinds of verse, blank and rhymed, songs and odes, the heroic couplet and the ballad style. In general, however, his poetry can be called pastoral and elegiac. A few of his poems are reminiscent of Milton. In spite of imitation, however, it is easy to see from his poems

that he contrived to be, in a vague manner, individual in his expression. Lyttelton's poetry is, again, of interest, in the words of Professor Courthope, as "showing how strongly the social tendency to 'nature-worship,' was influencing Englishmen of education and accomplishment, who had been brought up within the limits of classical reserve."

In English prose, Lyttelton stands on the same level as in poetry. He is an imitator of Montesquieu, Lucian and Fénelon, but he borrowed only the form and the manner. The material was his own, and it was largely moulded by his taste and scholarship in the 'Dialogues,' and by his power of clear thinking and satiric description in the 'Persian Letters.' He has a genuine love of literature, and his literary criticism is almost unexceptionable and surprising in his generation. The 'Letters' written to Bower during the journey in Wales show that he possessed a spontaneous love of Nature, and a mind remarkably free from the prevailing indifference to the real beauty of landscape and scenery. Lyttelton's style is, on a few occasions, vigorous and effective, and has quality; in general, it is clear and correct, but has no pretension to any special distinction.

We have considered in detail Lyttelton's contribution to English literature. Time has unquestionably reduced its value and importance. The verdict of his own and the succeeding generation was entirely in Lyttelton's favour. The age that followed has brushed him aside; the judgment may not be just, but it is not surprising, when greater writers are sharing the same sorry fate. To the student of literature, however, Lyttelton is still an interesting figure in the age of Pope and Johnson, both as the

author of the 'Dialogues of the Dead,' and the 'Monody,' and as the last and one of the greatest of noble patrons of literature in England.

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PART II.

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(a) The Newcastle Papers.

(b) Addl. MSS. No. 22130 (F.14), Letter to Mr. Payne, 5th April, 1771.

Addl. MSS. No. 28051 (F.395), Letter to Dr. Monsey, 12th October, 1772.

Addl. MSS. No. 28101 (F.187), Copy of three or four poems.

Addl. MSS. No. 28103 (F.116), Letter to Mr. Berkeley, 26th November, 1769.

Addl. MSS. No. 32198 (F. 33.41), Letter from J. West and reply.

Addl. MSS. No. 32737 (F.409), Copy of letter to the Duke of Bedford in Lyttelton's hand. 11th December, 1754.

Addl. MSS. No. 32915 (F.252), Letter to Hockin.

Addl. MSS. No. 37684. Unpublished poem by Lyttelton. ' Written in a Gentleman's Coke upon Lyttelton.'

## A MINOR AUGUSTAN

(c) Stowe MSS. 753 (F.164), Letter to his brother the Dean from Norwich.

Stowe MSS. 259 (F.154), Letter to one Mr. Phelps.

(d) Sloane MSS. 4291. Copy of letters to Voltaire in 1761 and to Bolingbroke, dated 30th July, 1740, already published.

LIBRARY OF THE TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN. MSS. No. 944 containing seven letters from Lyttelton to his publisher in Dublin, probably G. Faulkner, ranging over the years 1766-1772.

### 5. Prints.

PORTRAITS BY REYNOLDS AND WEST—Engravings by Every, Collyer, etc., in the British Museum.

PRINTS OF THE 'MOTION' AND 'HAGLEY PARK' in the British Museum.

PRIVATELY ACQUIRED.

APPENDIX II.  
SELECTIONS FROM THE UNPUBLISHED WORK  
OF LYTTTELTON.

I. A Poem 'Written in a Gentleman's Coke  
upon Lyttelton.'

Thou Precious Volume be my guide,  
Thro' Labyrinths of Law.  
Direct my steps thro' paths untry'd  
From error free and flaw.  
Assist to keep unturned my head,  
While I y'r maze explore ;  
Teach me thro' doubt's dark sea to wade,  
And touch the golden shore.  
Then Lovely book, in future times,  
When I in fun grow old ;  
When I shall scorn to scribble rhymes,  
And fill my purse with gold,  
Then putting off thy humble calf,  
In Turkey shalt thou shine,  
The Letter'd back, and gilded leaf,  
Shall join to make thee fine.  
An ample study I'll prepare ;  
Large shelves on every side,  
There free from moth, dust, Ink and Care,  
In peace shalt thou abide.  
No more shall students' thumb, or Pen,  
Molest or spoil thy page,  
No more shall any puzzled brain,  
On thee discharge its rage.  
That sleep, which none who read thee taste,  
For quiet shalt thou take ;  
And undisturbed enjoy your rest,  
You were once used to break.

SIR,

I am much obliged to you for the Book you have done me the favour to send me, and shall consider it with great care, before I finish that part of my Historical work which relates to Ireland. I am no further an Advocate for the Authenticity of the poems of Fingal and Temora than as it is supported by the Testimony of so many Persons of Honour whose veracity I think myself not permitted to question. I conclude you have seen the Attestations given to it in what Dr. Blair has published on that subject.

The letters you mention on the History of England, I believe to have been written by the late Lord Cork, but, whoever was the Author of them, he had no help from me, for I neither saw nor heard of them before they were published, and think them a very indifferent performance. It is not fair in the gentlemen of your Fraternity in Ireland to give an anonymous Work to me without my permission, and I hope that for the future they will be more cautious of making such a free use of my name. I am with great truth and regard, Sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant.

LYTTELTON.

London, April 21, 1767.

SIR,

I have been persuaded to publish two volumes of my History. . . . If it be reprinted in Ireland, I had rather you should have the care and benefit of it than anybody else in that Kingdom, but I have transferred the property of it to two Booksellers here, Mr. Sandby and Mr. Dodesley (sic.). You must therefore apply to them if you desire to have it transmitted to you sooner than to other booksellers in Dublin.

You are misinformed about Dr. Goldsmith's being the writer of the Letters on History ascribed falsely to me. I am well assured they were written by the late Lord Cork. If there be nothing added but notes to the new edition of the three last volumes of Swift's Works, I would not have you take the trouble to send them to me.

Believe me with great regard, Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,

LYTTELTON.

I would not have given an imperfect work to the Public but their extreme curiosity and importunity have extorted it from me. The remainder will be published as soon as my affairs and health will permit.

---

Hill Street,  
January 10, 1769.

SIR,

You and all your good friends do a great deal too much honour to my abilities in wishing me for your Governor ; but you do justice to my sentiments in believing that I ardently desire the Prosperity and happiness of Ireland, and should be happy to contribute to it in any situation to which I may be equal.

A MINOR AUGUSTAN

Then you and I in better terms,  
To sleep shall both agree,  
Till age and fate shall to the worms,  
Consign both thee and me.

British Museum Addl. MSS. 37,684.

2. Letters from Lyttelton to his publisher in Dublin.

May 7, 1766.

SIR,

I am much obliged to you for the Book you have done me the favour to send me, and shall consider it with great care, before I finish that part of my Historical work which relates to Ireland. I am no further an Advocate for the Authenticity of the poems of Fingal and Temora than as it is supported by the Testimony of so many Persons of Honour whose veracity I think myself not permitted to question. I conclude you have seen the Attestations given to it in what Dr. Blair has published on that subject.

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## A MINOR AUGUSTAN

I have a most grateful sense of Mr. O'Connor's (sic) esteem and goodness for me, which draws upon him much trouble. Be pleased to give him the enclosed papers, which contain some Quaeres and Doubts relating to part of the Extracts he has favoured me with, and which I omitted to mention to him in my letter of last post for want of time.

I am with great esteem and regard, Sir,  
Your most obedient and faithful servant,  
LYTTELTON.

Dublin,  
Trinity College Library,  
MSS. 944.

### 3. Letter from Lyttelton to Dr. Monsey, a prominent doctor with a large practice amongst the Whig Nobility.

Hagley,  
October 12, 1772.

Much joy to my dear Monsey on his being arrived at his seventy-eighth year in his way to a hundred. Lord Chesterfield, I fear, is a bright sun almost setting ; but you are still in full lustre, and must shine many years to make us amends for his loss. Seventy-eight is no age for a stout fellow like you. Look up Lord Bathurst, or come and read the Tombstones in my Churchyard here at Hagley. You will see that a man who happened to die at sixty was considered by the clerk, who wrote his epitaph, as an unfortunate youth that had perished in the prime of life.

' Like as a flower, was I cut down ' . . . Near to this stripling, are the graves of two of his neighbours, one of whom lived to eighty-eight, and the other to ninety-five.



My grandfather died untimely at eighty-seven, by getting a bruise on his shin, which hindered his usual walk to the top of his Park Hill and made him unable to digest the fat of a venison Pasty, which he commonly ate with a spoon ; but one of his gamekeepers, old Paget, attained to more than a hundred years, notwithstanding a large Beer glass of English Brandy, which he drank every morning for the last thirty years before his death. Think then to what an age, your ingenious constitution, philosophical temperance, and medical knowledge ought to carry you, especially being cherished (as you are and ever will be) by the smiles of Mrs. Montagu, which keep your heart always warm, and your spirits in a quick and timely flow!

I thank you, my dear friend, for your congratulations on my son's happy marriage. . . . When you see Lord Chesterfield assure him of my best respects and most sincere affection. I hope to see you in town about the middle of next month, and am ever most affectionately,

My dear Doctor,

Your faithful friend and obedient servant,  
LYTTELTON.

British Museum,  
Addl. MSS. 28051, (f. 395).

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